

Shevardnadze meets Ozal

ANKARA (R) — Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze met President Turgut Ozal Thursday on the second day of a visit sealing improved Soviet-Turkish relations. The semi-official Anatolian news agency said they would discuss the Gulf crisis, bilateral economic links and proposals for cooperation among Black Sea littoral states. It said Shevardnadze was expected to brief Ozal on his talks in the United States earlier this week with U.S. President George Bush and Secretary of State James Baker. Turkey and the Soviet Union back U.N. sanctions on Iraq, but have not sent troops to join U.S.-led forces in the Gulf. Ozal, expected to visit Moscow in February or March, says he favours a peaceful solution, but his critics at home accuse him of seeking an active military role for Turkey if war breaks out. Shevardnadze, the first Soviet foreign minister to visit NATO-member Turkey for 25 years, held talks earlier with Prime Minister Yildirim Akbulut and Finance Minister Adnan Kahveci. He was due to sign several bilateral economic agreements with Foreign Minister Ahmet Kucuktepe Altunozin before leaving.

Jordan Times

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Iraq rejects Bahraini charge

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq Friday denied remarks by Bahrain's prime minister that it had planned to capture more Gulf Arab states after its invasion of Kuwait in August. "It is saddening to hear this talk from someone we respect and whose viewpoints we also respect," First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan said. "We assert that the measures applied to the province of Kuwait and the villages of (Kuwait's ousted ruler) Al Sabah family are not for other Gulf states regardless of their size or the insults of their rulers," the Iraqi News Agency (INA) quoted him as saying. Bahrain's Gulf Daily Wednesday quoted Sheikh Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa as saying: "The painful fact is that the Iraqis did intend the same situation in the Eastern Province (of Saudi Arabia), Bahrain, Qatar and possibly the UAE (United Arab Emirates)." The Iraqis definitely intended to drive their forces across our borders," Ramadan said. Sheikh Khalifa's remarks showed that he, like King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, had fallen victim to "misleading information" spread by the United States and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

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Tight security for Adonis

AMMAN (J.T.) — Renowned Arab poet and writer Ahmad Ali Sa'idi, better known as Adonis, came under attack by Islamist university students Friday night as he recited his controversial poetry at the Royal Cultural Centre (RCC). Syrian-born Adonis was provided with tight security as he left the conference hall where his recital was disrupted by shouts of "Allah Akbar" from some 40 bearded university students who described Adonis' poetry as "blasphemous." All doors of the RCC were locked and about 30 uniformed police and a number of plainclothes security men tried to quiet down the protestors, but stopped short of clashing with the Islamist youth who walked out chanting, "No God but Allah, Adonis is the enemy of Allah." The audience of about 30 gave Adonis a standing ovation as the youth left the hall. The Muslim Brotherhood movement denied that it was responsible for the protest.

5 Israeli officers killed in crash

TEL AVIV (AP) — Five Israeli air force officers were killed when their light plane crashed during a flight mission, the military command said Friday. In a brief announcement, it said the accident occurred Thursday night in southern Israel. There were no survivors. Giora Rom, head of the air force staff, said plane took off in the dark in "slightly hazy atmosphere" and hit the ground about two minutes later. Rom added that the pilots were experienced and that the reasons for the accident were unclear.

Assad, Hrawi discuss security

BEIRUT (R) — President Elias Hrawi returned to Beirut Friday after talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad on consolidating efforts to end Lebanon's 15 years of civil war. The two leaders held long talks in Damascus Thursday evening at their 10th meeting since Hrawi's election last year. A presidential statement issued in Beirut said Assad and Hrawi discussed strengthening a security plan for reunited Beirut, which was put under the control of Lebanese troops 11 days ago. "Both presidents stressed the urgent need to act on required steps in the political and administrative fields according to the national reconciliation pact," the statement said.

Bonn to press Soviets for Honecker

BONN (R) — Germany's government will press Moscow to hand over ousted East German ruler Erich Honecker, who is living in a Soviet army hospital, to Berlin prosecutors for trial on manslaughter charges, a spokesman said Friday.

Dhaka announces March 2 polls

DHAKA (R) — Bangladesh's acting President Shahabuddin Ahmad has set the date for parliamentary elections on March 2, an official statement said Friday. It said details for the elections would be announced shortly.

Gorbachev receives Nobel medal, cash

MOSCOW (AP) — President Mikhail Gorbachev received the Nobel Peace Prize Medal in a Kremlin ceremony Friday and said he would donate the cash award to charity. The TASS news agency said.

Paper says Libya behind bombing

LONDON (R) — A British newspaper said Friday investigating had discovered "conclusive" proof that Libya was behind the 1988 Pan Am airliner bombing that killed 270 people. The Independent newspaper, in a front-page lead article giving unnamed sources close to the investigation, said the conclusion was based on analysis of a detonator fragment recovered from the crash site.

Brotherhood-independents coalition splits; way clear for Badran to reshuffle

New cabinet expected by end of this week

By Ghadeer Taber
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The biggest bloc in Parliament has failed to reach agreement on joining a new government and appears to be breaking up only two months after it was formed. "They agreed to disagree," said an independent Islamist deputy, who is a member of the Parliamentary Unity Coalition. "This means that each group in the coalition can negotiate with the government and any member of the coalition can join the government on his own," the deputy told the Jordan Times.

The 36-member coalition, which emerged as a strong force last month by ensuring that its nominee, Dr. Abdul Latif Arabiyat, was elected speaker of the House, met late into the night Wednesday to decide about participation in the government but no consensus was reached either way, the deputy said.

Four members of the Muslim Brotherhood, Abdul Munem Abu Zant, Hammam Saeed, Mohammad Abu Fares and Ibrahim Kharisat, and four fellow deputies from other blocs proposed a motion against joining the government. The issue was put to a vote and the eight

deputies lost. Parliamentary sources said that the leadership of the Brotherhood had already taken a decision to join the government and that the four Brotherhood deputies who were against the decision to join were trying "to override the leadership's decision."

The Islamist deputy said then there was a debate on whether to join the government of Mudar Badran by assuming portfolios in a limited reshuffle or press for a new government. Again, no consensus was reached, he said. According to coalition rules, any decision by the group re-

quires the votes of at least 75 per cent of the members. Salim Zoubi, a pan-Arab nationalist member of the coalition who voted against joining the government in a limited reshuffle, said the meeting showed a split "between and within the various blocs comprising the coalition."

Zoubi said that only 60 per cent of the members of the coalition participated in the voting. "The other 40 per cent either did not attend the meeting or walked out before the voting took place," the Ramtha deputy said.

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3 Israelis stabbed to death in Jaffa

TEL AVIV (Agencies) — Palestinians stabbed to death three Israelis at Tel Aviv factory Friday, police said, charging the killings were carried out to mark three years since the founding of the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas movement.

Hundreds of angry Israelis immediately gathered to demand revenge on Palestinians, and others stoned Palestinian workers in cars returning to the occupied Gaza Strip. The windows of one car were smashed as the Palestinian driver fled, and it was later set on fire.

Two other cars were damaged by stones, a Palestinian suffered a minor stab injury, and three Jewish rioters were arrested, police said. Police Minister Roni Milo said he would propose to the cabinet new limits on Palestinians from

Gaza and the West Bank entering Israel. He told Israel Radio he already had ordered police to step up efforts to find Palestinians staying "illegally" in the Jewish state.

Right-wing politicians demanded a crackdown on Palestinians working in Israel, while left-wingers blamed the killings on the failure of Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts.

Tel Aviv police spokeswoman Etie Grinberg said the bodies of two factory workers and a secretary, were discovered Friday morning inside a factory in the industrial zone of Jaffa, a town governed by Tel Aviv.

They had been stabbed repeatedly and anti-Israeli slogans signed by the fundamentalist group Hamas were spray painted in black on a wall inside the factory, police said.

Police Commissioner Yaacov Termer rushed to the scene and said the slaying was a "grave event. The sole reason for this murder is nationalism. The slogans written in Arabic on the walls inside are clear."

"They took the responsibility and they came for one reason only, to kill. Hamas did it, they did it for the purpose of killing to mark the Hamas anniversary," he said.

Hamas had called for an escalation of the Palestinian uprising Friday, the third anniversary of the movement's founding.

Police questioned Palestinians from nearby factories while several hundred Jews at the site, shouting "Death to the Arabs" and "No work for the Arabs."

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Benjedid arrives in Oman

MUSCAT (Agencies) — Algerian President Chadli Benjedid arrived Friday on the fourth stop of a Gulf peace mission clouded by Saudi rejection of talks with Iraq.

Benjedid was accorded a red carpet welcome by Sultan Qaboos on arrival from Iran. Qaboos is the current chairman of the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) which also comprises Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

The Algerian leader visited Jordan and Iraq before he began his two-day visit to Tehran Thursday.

The Oman News Agency said talks with Qaboos would deal with "issues of mutual interest in light of the latest developments in the region."

Earlier in the week, an Arab diplomat said Benjedid was attempting to arrange a meeting between Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia. But the Saudi govern-

Oman calls on Arab states to back Algerian efforts

NICOSIA (R) — Oman called on Arab states on Friday to support Gulf peace efforts by Algerian President Chadli Benjedid and said optimism over peace was growing.

Benjedid arrived in Oman earlier on the fourth leg of a tour to discuss an Arab solution to the Gulf crisis. "It can be said that optimism in regard to the Gulf crisis is now replacing pessimism," Oman's minister of state for foreign affairs, Yousef Ben Alawi, said.

"And for optimism to be totally felt there must be full support for the Algerian effort to find a peaceful settlement."

"We call on all Arab states to support these efforts." Alawi said Benjedid's mission was "very important in these critical circumstances."

The minister, quoted by the Omani News Agency, was speaking after Benjedid held an hour of talks in Muscat with Sultan Qaboos.

ment threw cold water on that plan, saying Iraq should withdraw from Kuwait before any talks are held. In a brief talk with reporters before taking off from Tehran's Mehrabad airport, Benjedid said

his tour of regional countries was aimed at peacefully resolving the Gulf crisis sparked by Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait. But he acknowledged that

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Bush threatens to call off planned talks with Iraq

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — U.S. President George Bush is prepared to call off planned talks with Iraq on the Gulf crisis because the two countries have been unable to agree on meeting dates, two senators said Friday.

The two governments have been unable to agree on a date for Secretary of State James Baker to visit Baghdad to talk to Iraq's President Saddam Hussein, and for Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz to meet with Bush in Washington.

"The president — as I gather his mood today — is prepared to have no meetings rather than to see a lot of shoving around... if we have no meetings so be it," Senator Richard Lugar said after meeting with Bush Friday morning.

Lugar and McCain were part of a group of Republican and Democratic congressmen who met with Bush to convey their

support in the event military force is required to drive the Iraqis from Kuwait.

McCain said they expressed concern to Bush that U.S. allies were not contributing more to the Gulf military effort. The United States dominates a multinational force arrayed against Iraq.

"Japan, Germany — almost everybody but the Saudis and the Kuwaitis, quite frankly — have not fulfilled the commitments that they made to support us in this effort, financially in the Japanese and German cases and militarily in some other cases," McCain said.

He said Bush also expressed concern about allied contributions to the effort against Iraq. A Democrat at the meeting, Representative Robert Torricelli, said a show of national unity on the Gulf was necessary to prevent Iraq from misreading

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U.N. urges end to aid for Israel

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — The General Assembly has urged member states to halt aid to Israel over its occupation of Arab territories and called anew for a peace conference on the Palestinian issue.

The United States voted against the measures after its representative Jack Stein complained to the assembly that "such divisive language does not promote the cause of peace."

The assembly adopted the measures by wide margins. The United States has been struggling to remove language endorsing a Middle East peace conference from a draft resolution of the more influential U.N. Security Council, fearing it would look like a "concession" to Iraq.

Israel vehemently opposes any such conference. A U.S. veto of the proposal could jeopardize the tenuous Arab coalition the United States has aligned against Iraq, which has championed the Palestinian call for a state since it invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2.

A Security Council vote on the resolution has been put off six times in a week. Another one is tentatively planned for Monday.

The United States has not yet reached agreement with sponsors of the resolution. The Soviet Union is seeking talks with the Palestine Liberation Organisation before the vote, the diplomats added.

Council President Abdallah Al Ashtal of Yemen confirmed the postponement of the vote. The third in less than a week. He said it was "important" that Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze talk to Palestine Liberation Organisation leader Yasser Arafat.

The two were supposed to meet in Ankara Thursday or Friday, according to Palestinian sources at the United Nations. Shevardnadze was in Turkey Thursday and Friday.

Cuban Ambassador Ricardo Alarcon, in rallying the General Assembly to endorse a peace conference, declared, "There is a need for a comprehensive peace in the Middle East based on the withdrawal of Israel from the occupied territories."

The resolution endorsing a peace conference was adopted 99-19 with 32 abstentions. Israel, the United States and several European nations were among those voting against it.

The resolution also condemned "Israel's aggression" against the Palestinians and declared that U.S. military and economic aid has "encouraged Israel to pursue its aggressive and expansionist policies."

It also declared that strategic U.S.-Israeli cooperation has "had adverse effects on efforts for the establishment of a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in the Middle East."

Stein protested that "the United States remains firmly supportive of efforts to achieve a comprehensive peace," but added that "the shape of a final settlement cannot be dictated by any party in advance."



PRAYER FOR RAIN: Citizens Friday performed a special prayer for rains. Jordan needs urgent rains to help the agricultural sector (photos by Yusef Al 'Allan)

U.S. doubts over Arab-Arab dialogue unfounded — Crown Prince

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Friday American suspicion that an Arab-Arab dialogue will harm efforts to resolve the Gulf crisis are unfounded.

"Clearly all parties have to talk. You notice those countries aligned with the military force buildup in the (region) meeting in Cairo on the one side and Arab visitors to Baghdad on the other," the Crown Prince said in an interview with the American Cable News Network (CNN).

The Crown Prince said talks on both sides should be linked in order to achieve progress towards peace. "At some stage I think that should be hypenated if a contribution to be made," he said.

Following are excerpts from

the interview:
Q: The exchange of talks between (Iraqi Foreign Minister) Tariq Aziz and Secretary of State James Baker we have not yet got a date for them add have to assume that we will have a date. But is this the kind of thing that is good for the Gulf to reach a peaceful settlement? Is it a first step?
A: Let us hope so. I think the dispute is very clearly recognised in paragraph 3 of Resolution 660. I think that the first step is clearly to recognise the need to implement the operative paragraphs of that resolution. But we used the term discussion. I believe yes. A discussion has to take place as to how this implementation could take place and let us hope that the first step in Washington will be followed by subsequent steps including James Baker's visit to Baghdad.

Q: Are you concerned that the dates have not been set up firmly just yet?

A: I think there has to be an agreement on dates, and every indication seems to be that way. It will be tragic if war was to devastate the region simply because the parties were not able to meet and talk...

Q: There is a major move now going forward by Algerian President Benjedid. He has been here to see King Hussein. He has made many many talks with other leaders before coming here. He has been to Baghdad. What can you tell us about those talks?

A: We have deep faith in his statesmanship, his integrity and I believe that he is concentrating centrally on the need for Arab contribution to peace-making and that comes very centrally in Resolution 660. There is no contradiction between Arab participation and international resolution of the Gulf dispute.

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Doctors raise alarm over possible Gulf casualties

LONDON (AP) — An anti-war group of British doctors said Friday the country will be unable to cope with the number of casualties that would result from a conflict in the Gulf.

"Preparations are being made in the expectation of heavy war casualties. But these measures cannot match their likely scale," said a report released Friday by the Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons.

Meanwhile, Americans on the last evacuation flight from Iraq headed home Friday, closing the chapter on one issue in the Gulf crisis.

A C-5 military transport plane took off from Frankfurt, Germany, Friday, carrying U.S. Ambassador Nathaniel Howell, four other diplomats, 33 other Americans and non-U.S. citizen family members, as well as 15 people going to Canada.

The passengers were from a flight 91 people left Baghdad late Thursday night. Other foreigners had made their own plans to return home. U.S. officials said.

Howell and his staff in Kuwait had defied Iraqi orders to close foreign missions in its "19th province." British envoys, who had been the only other holdouts, were also expected to leave now that Iraq has allowed all previously detained foreigners out of the country.

Howell left the Gulf region aboard the last of the evacuation charters.

Friday, the British Ministry of Defence rebutted figures used by the Medical Campaign Against Nuclear Weapons in its conclusion that plans being made for Gulf war casualties will be inadequate.

20 dead in Morocco riot

CASABLANCA (R) — A Moroccan union said more than 20 people were killed and dozens wounded in the central city of Fez Friday when security forces clashed with demonstrators during a general strike. A spokesman for the Union Generale des Travailleurs Marocains (UGTM) said rioting broke out when students attacked buses driven by soldiers brought in to replace striking bus drivers.

A UGTM official in Fez contacted by telephone said between 20 and 30 people had been killed. "I can hear gunfire while I am talking to you," he said.

He said heavy police reinforcements and troops in armoured cars moved into the city after students set fire to two buses and smashed the windows of 14 others.

The UGTM and the Confederation Democratique du Tra-

vail (CDT) called a one-day general strike Friday in support of a long list of demands including doubling of the legal minimum wage to 2,000 dirhams (\$250) a month.

Both the UGTM and CDT said the Fez incidents did not involve their members, who had been told to stay at home during the strike.

A state security source said several members of the security forces were injured in Fez but did not confirm demonstrators had been killed.

Government officials were not immediately available for comment.

A spokesman for the CDT said there were serious incidents in Fez but had no casualty figures.

"We have no details because we did not have any strike pickets out. We told our people to stay at home," he said.

EC to give aid to Soviets

ROME (Agencies) — European Community (EC) leaders Friday agreed to give immediate emergency aid to the Soviet Union to fight food shortages and bolster Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

Italian officials hosting a two-day EC summit said the aid package amounted to about \$1 billion in grants and credits.

"All, without exception, are in agreement to give immediate help to the Soviet Union," said summit spokesman Pio Mastrobuoni, summarising the views of the 12 leaders at their opening session Friday morning.

The European leaders also agreed on the need to support Gorbachev's reform efforts. Earlier this week, the United States guaranteed the Soviets \$1.3 billion in loans to buy U.S. farm products and manufactured goods.

The European leaders stressed Friday that the Soviet problem was less one of the famine than of poor distribution. Italian officials said the food would be targeted for Moscow and Leningrad.

The EC leaders were equally concerned about preserving Gorbachev's political hold, which is under constant challenge from various quarters of Soviet society.

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U.S., Israel of one mind, Shamir says

NEW YORK (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir told Jewish leaders Thursday that his meeting this week with President George Bush had been constructive and positive and the two countries were firm about preventing Iraq from benefiting from its invasion of Kuwait.

The prime minister capped a week-long visit to New York and Washington and meetings with Bush, Vice-President Dan Quayle and Secretary of State James Baker with an address before the Conference of Presidents of Major Jewish Organizations.

"Israel and the United States are of one mind in regard to the absolute necessity to prevent Saddam Hussein from gaining any advantage from his aggression, and the necessity to remove the threat to the region and to Israel which is posed by Iraq's military power," he said.

Shamir delivered his speech and answered questions at the United Jewish Appeal Federation offices before boarding a plane back to Israel.

He stressed Israel's unequivocal support of Bush's Gulf policy and said the week's meetings further demonstrated the strength of the U.S.-Israeli alliance.

"It was clear that the areas of agreement between us are overwhelmingly greater than points of disagreement," he said.

The meetings came after a year and a half of tense relations between the two countries over peace efforts in the Middle East and Israeli treatment of Palestinians.

Shamir said he told Bush that Israel was ready "at any time, to negotiate with the Palestinians," but they agreed that the Gulf crisis was an obstacle to any immediate action.

"We will continue to consult with the United States and prepare the ground for the resumption of the efforts at the appropriate time," he said.

Shamir also said he was pleased to talk with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, who surprised Shamir by requesting a meeting with him.

Calling their discussion "friendly," Shamir said they had talked of normalising diplomatic relations between Israel and the Soviet Union.

He said Shevardnadze expressed concern over the weapons proliferation in the Middle East and hoped the Soviet Union could "contribute to a safer and more secure climate in our region."

Regarding the mass migration of Soviet Jews to Israel, Shamir said he had no choice but to appeal to the United States and other countries to help cover \$40 billion resettlement costs.

Soviet Jews have been arriving in Israel at a rate of about 30,000 per month, Shamir said he hoped United States could find a way to help without burdening U.S. taxpayers.

Saudi protesters on

U.S. feminist award list

WASHINGTON (R) — A U.S. feminist group has named as its first annual feminists of the year Saudi women who broke a taboo in their conservative country by driving cars through the capital last month.

Among the others chosen for the 1990 honour list of the Virginia-based Feminist Majority Foundation was Irish President-elect Mary Robinson for having "run as a feminist."

The group said its list, with 13 awards, honoured those who risked their jobs and took other bold action to promote equality between women and men.

About 50 women, many from prominent families, defied a Saudi ban on women drivers in a Nov. 6 protest by dropping off their chauffeurs and driving their cars through Riyadh.

They were detained by police but released after signing a pledge not to repeat the action. Several of the protesters were

Japan rejects criticism of Gulf policy

TOKYO (R) — The Japanese government has been forced to defend its Gulf policy against angry Japanese who say it falls between toughness and appeasement, and in the end pleases nobody.

Japanese who have returned to Japan in the last two weeks, many of them business executives and professionals, have been unusually frank in their criticism of the government.

"We all had the same feelings of frustration that our government was simply doing nothing — not actually sending personnel to help U.N. forces, but still donating money so that the Iraqis saw us as their enemy," one told Reuters.

The man, who asked not to be named, said some large companies were telling their employees not to criticise the government's handling of the Gulf crisis in the press.

Another said diplomacy without the backing of military force was as good as useless.

"I think the fact that so few people agreed with dispatching the Self-Defence Force shows how little everyone cared," he said.

In November, the government withdrew a bill to send troops in a non-combat role to the Gulf after widespread public opposition.

A third Japanese said: "A nation can't have peace without power. People living in Japan seem never to understand that."

Taiso Watanabe, spokesman for the Foreign Ministry, told a news conference Friday there was no alternative to the government's policy.

"We extend our sympathy to the hostages and their families. Their suffering must be unbearable," he said.

"We had to stand firm against the aggressor and invader and follow the United Nations sanctions. We could not have made a deal. Dividing the alliance would not work," he said.

Japan has supported the U.N. sanctions and given money to the multinational force and Middle East countries.

The Japanese press this week has carried many complaints.

The weekly Shukan Asahi magazine quoted one Japanese who was held in Iraq as saying he wanted to punch Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama, complaining that he had got in the way of the attempts to secure their safety.

Velayati: Iran, Turkey share aims for Gulf peace

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati, back in Tehran after a two-day visit to Turkey, said the two nations agreed on the need for a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis that would include restoration of Kuwait's independence.

Velayati reiterated that Iran and Turkey also shared common views on the territorial integrity of Iraq, and dismissed any change in the geographical map of the region as "very dangerous," the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported.

"We consider an outbreak of war in this sensitive region detrimental to the interests of regional countries as we regard Iraq's invasion of Kuwait as a wrong act," Velayati was quoted as saying at a news conference after his return Tuesday.

Velayati said his talks in Ankara focused on the Gulf crisis and expanding ties between Iran and Turkey. He described them as "very constructive and fruitful."

Asked about allegations of smuggling to Iraq via the Iranian border, Velayati said: "We arrested some suspects in this connection two months ago and ever since we have not had any other case."

He said issues related to the economic cooperation organisation grouping Iran, Turkey and

Kuwaiti envoy to U.N. urges peaceful solution

LOS ANGELES (R) — A senior Kuwaiti official Thursday urged a peaceful solution to the Gulf crisis, saying the use of force would hurt the Kuwaiti people more than anyone else.

"We are the last people who would be calling for military action, because our people would be in the front line," Sheikh Saud Nasir Al Sabah, the Kuwaiti ambassador to the United States, said.

He added, however, that the allies could not afford to wait too long after the Jan. 15 deadline set by the United Nations for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait before taking action.

"The longer we wait, the more difficult it will be for everyone. That will enable Iraq to enforce its position in Kuwait, to develop more weapons. It will get more dangerous, and it goes on."

Sabah, talking to reporters, before addressing a meeting of the town hall of California, a public affairs forum, said the United Nations sanctions, imposed shortly after Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, did not appear to be working.

"They have been in operation for four months now and we have not seen any sign that they are having any effect on Iraq," he said.

Sabah, who had represented Kuwait in Washington since 1981 and was formerly the Kuwaiti ambassador to Britain, said Kuwaiti intelligence believed 2,000 Kuwaitis were killed in the initial invasion, and that 1,500 members of the Kuwaiti resistance movement had since been killed.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Aoun loyalists leave sanctuary

BEIRUT (R) — Five Lebanese officers loyal to ousted General Michel Aoun have joined President Elias Hrawi's forces after being holed up in the French embassy for more than two months, military sources said Friday. They said the French ambassador to Lebanon, Rene Ala, handed over the officers to army commander General Emile Lahoud on Thursday evening after several days of talks between French diplomats and the army command. The soldiers, two lieutenant colonels and three captains, were given refuge at the French embassy in the Christian suburb of Hazmeh along with Aoun and his top two aides on Oct. 13 when a Syrian-led assault forced the general to surrender. Aoun, Issam Abu Jamra and Fouad Ma'alouf, who defied the government's authority for 11 months, were granted political asylum in Paris but Hrawi has refused to let them go, saying he wanted to try them as war criminals. The sources said the five officers agreed to join Lahoud after receiving assurances that they would not be prosecuted. Official sources said France was conducting behind-the-scenes talks to secure the departure of Aoun and his associates, but no breakthrough had yet been achieved.

Tunisian publisher, journalist fined

TUNIS (R) — A Tunisian newspaper publisher and a journalist have been fined and given two-month suspended prison sentences for publishing a satirical article about absenteeism among members of parliament, their colleagues said Friday. Publisher Mohammed Ben Youssef and journalist Adel Lahmar of the independent French-language Tunis-Habib newspaper were fined 500 dinars (\$600) each. Thursday's prosecution of Tunis-Habib was one of five against private or opposition party newspapers this year. Newspapers and magazines have been confiscated or suspended on six occasions.

Curses, flying chairs mar Nazareth meeting

NAZARETH (AP) — The Christmas spirit was not apparent in the town of Jesus' youth as the town council met. One member cursed another, chairs flew, and two council members were injured. Both sides in the battle filed police complaints following the Thursday night brawl at council chambers in the town. Town clerk Abdullah Jibril remained in hospital Friday with a head wound inflicted by a thrown chair. One councilman was treated for facial cuts and released. Witnesses said the incident began when Mayor Tewfik Zayad ruled that councilman Mazen Makhoum of the fundamentalist Muslim movement was out of order in trying to address an issue not on the agenda. Makhoum responded with a shout, "may God put an end to your life," and the brawl erupted. Nazareth has a colourful history beyond being the place where Christ grew to manhood. Its past stretches to the early bronze age, about 3000 B.C., and it's been ruled by Jews, Crusaders and Arabs. In World War I, it was the Turkish army headquarters in Palestine. Today it has a population of about 50,000. Its 17-member council includes five members of the Muslim movement, nine from the leftist Hadash Party, two from the left-centre Progressive List for Peace and Equality, and one from the National Religious Party.

Nuseibah barred from travel

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli Interior Minister Arye Deri has barred leading Palestinian nationalist Sari Nuseibah from leaving the occupied territories for three months. Nuseibah told Reuters that police served him the order which said his travelling abroad could endanger "state security." He said he recently requested permission to leave to lecture at a symposium on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict in Washington this weekend. Israel radio said Nuseibah, a philosophy professor, would soon be indicted on allegations that he drafted leaflets which directed the three-year-old uprising. The Palestinian nationalist has in the past been named as a paymaster of the uprising in indictments against other activists. Last month, Israel jailed without trial three of the leading Palestinian nationalists from the occupied territories.

Britain's envoy to Iraq back in London

LONDON (R) — Britain's ambassador in Baghdad returned to London Thursday for two weeks of talks on the Gulf crisis with British officials. Envoy Harold Walker left Baghdad aboard a U.S. charter flight to Frankfurt and flew to London accompanied by 13 Britons evacuated from Iraq and Kuwait. He told reporters at London's Heathrow airport that developments in the Gulf crisis, including the possibility of war breaking out next month, meant there was a need for direct talks with government ministers and foreign office officials. He said he expected to return to Baghdad on Dec. 28. Walker said issues he would discuss with Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd would include instructions for embassy staff in the event of war. The last two British diplomats in Kuwait, Ambassador Michael Weston and Consul Larry Banks, are due to leave within a week because most Britons there have been evacuated via Baghdad. The Foreign Office estimates there are about 40 British nationals in Kuwait and 140 in Iraq.

Argentine warships to return from Gulf

BUENOS AIRES (R) — The two warships Argentina sent to the Gulf blockade are due to come home by the end of January, Foreign Minister Domingo Cavallo said Thursday, according to local private news agencies. Cavallo told the NA and DYN agencies that the "Almirante Brown," and "Spiro" warships, which are helping U.S.-led forces maintain a trade embargo against Iraq, would not be replaced unless the Argentine congress gives President Carlos Menem authority to keep the vessels in the Gulf if war breaks out. Menem, the only Latin American leader to dispatch troops to the Gulf, last week sent congress a bill asking it to allow the navy vessels to play a supporting role in any war.

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Live-in nanny to take care of one year-old twins. Experience and love for children are a must.
Call 829562 between 2-4 pm and 7-9 pm.

Superpowers moving to close down costly Afghan war

By Barry Schweid
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Superpower diplomacy may yet resolve Afghanistan after 12 years of war, one million deaths and staggering devastation that has made refugees of five million people.

The children, as is often the case in war, have suffered the most.

About half of the dead and displaced are children. Infant mortality is extremely high, rivalled only by the death rate in Cambodia and Sudan. Tuberculosis and malaria are the biggest killers — inside the camps in Pakistan and Iran and within Afghanistan itself.

This week, the United States and the Soviet Union took some serious steps to end the fighting. They agreed in principle to stop providing the combatants with weapons and decided an election should be held under international supervision.

"There is a wide area of agreement between us," Secretary of State James Baker said after talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze. But, he said, "there are still questions that have to be answered."

Among them is the scope of an assistance programme to rehabilitate the country. The job is immense.

Apart from the one million deaths, the war has left 700,000 widows and orphans and 535,000 disabled veterans, destroyed one-third of the country's villages and two-thirds of its paved roads and created two internal refugees.

More than 100,000 of the country's educated elite have resettled abroad. Tensions

among diverse ethnic groups have been exacerbated as the Soviet Union, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and other outsiders sought to manipulate the outcome of the war to suit their own interests.

The Soviets wanted a client state. Pakistan wanted a government in Kabul it could influence. And the Saudis used their wealth to try to swing Afghanistan into the Muslim camp.

The United States dubbed the guerrillas "freedom fighters" and armed them to combat Soviet influence.

Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev withdrew the Red Army last year after more than nine years of warfare against the guerrillas and many U.S. analysts assumed President Najibullah's pro-Moscow government would collapse soon afterward.

They underestimated his skills and also the frictions among the guerrillas, some of whom are controlled by Pakistan and inclined to a Muslim fundamentalism at odds with democratic principles.

Gorbachev's move did not remove the superpowers from the conflict, however.

The Soviets provide the Kabul government with about \$500 million a year in military assistance. The United States and Saudi Arabia each help the guerrillas with about \$300 million in weapons and other military aid.

The improvement in U.S.-Soviet relations in having a positive impact on regional conflicts like the one in Afghanistan. For instance, the two powers are cooperating to try to end the fighting in Cambodia and Angola.

Afghanistan, which was

founded in 1717, was ruled by kings until Zahir Shah was overthrown in 1973. A Marxist coup in 1978 touched off a war that continues to tear the country apart.

In the meantime, the United Nations has launched a reconstruction programme. U.S. contributions have been dwarfed by some other nations — \$15.5 million compared with a \$600-million Soviet pledge and \$145 million by Japan.

Ethem Bircind, who coordinates the U.N. Children's Fund Programme for Afghanistan, described the awful impact of the war in an interview Thursday.

Most of the children in refugee camps in Pakistan and Iran were born there. "They don't know their own country, their own culture," he said.

The children's fund and

other organisations have managed to immunise about 60 per cent of the children against killer diseases. Within Afghanistan, he estimated, only about 20 per cent are immunised.

"We cannot reach the children inside because the war is going on and there are clashes," he said.

Three million children are not going to school, Bircind said, contributing "to an army of illiterates."

Literacy in Afghanistan was always a problem. Before the war, only three per cent of the Afghan women had been taught to read and write.

"What you need to do now is to rebuild the whole country," Bircind said. "If the war stops then we can say it is not the bomb, it is the water you are drinking that is hurting you."

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CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church, Sweid, Tel. 810740
Assumption of God Church, Tel. 82725
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624990
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 67449
De la Salle Church, Tel. 661757
Tortosa Church, Tel. 623366
Church of the Annunciation, Tel. 623541
Anglican Church, Tel. 625383, Tel. 62545
Armenian Catholic Church, Tel. 77331
Armenian Orthodox Church, Tel. 77331
St. Ephraim Church, Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church, Tel. 685226
Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tel. 811295
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, Tel. 815317, 654932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
It will be partly cloudy and winds will be westerly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.
Min/Max temp.
Amman: 7/17

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME ONE
15:00 Telecast
15:30 Koran
15:45 Programme review
15:55 Children programme
17:30 Educational programme
18:00 News Summary
18:10 Local series
18:20 Programme review
20:30 News in Arabic
21:30 Arabic series
21:30 Programme review
21:50 Local programme
22:30 Arabic series
23:00 News in Arabic
23:10 Series continued

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Fruits of Passion
19:00 News in French
19:15 Ajajoun Hui en France
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Good Morning Mes Bites
21:00 Encounter
21:30 Feature film: "The Salamander"
22:00 News in English
22:20 Continuation of the film

PRAYER TIMES

05:51 Fajr
06:23 (Sunrise) Dhuha
11:31 Dhuhur
14:15 Ash
16:35 Maghrib
18:01 Isha

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

Aqaba 13:26
Deserts 6:21
Jordan Valley 14:24

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 19, Aqaba 23. Humidity readings: Amman 95 per cent, Aqaba 36 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
AMMAN:
Dr. Khalil Al Jabali 740740
Dr. Tawfiq Qasbi 625029
Dr. Nabil Al Maridi 615338
Dr. Youssef Al Hourani 625478
First pharmacy 561912
Ferdows pharmacy 773536
Natrout pharmacy 637025
Al Salam pharmacy 636706
Yacoub pharmacy 649445
Shameen pharmacy 637660

REDD:
Dr. Ahmad Bishara (—)
Al Shamsa pharmacy (985238)

ZARQA:
Dr. Mubashir Hijiwi (—)
Khalidh pharmacy 985417

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate
Rescue 630341

Emergency
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 696390
Public Security Department 43021
Hotel Complaints 609000
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information
(directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power
Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 06-53200

HOSPITALS
AMMAN:
Hawram Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidh Maternity, J. Amn. 642416
Akileh Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jabal Amman Maternity 642662
Malhas, J. Amman 635140
Palestine, Shamsi 641714
Shamsi Hospital 669131
University Hospital 545845
The Islamic, Abdali 6612737
Al-Ahli, Abdali 641646
Italian, Al-Mishraq 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marka 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/30
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)991071
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732
IRKID:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555
Great Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al-Nafies Hospital (02)271700
AQABA:
Princess Haysa Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
05:45 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
18:00 Damascus (RJ)
18:15 Aqaba (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
09:15 Beirut (ME)

18:30 Dhahran (RJ) 14:00 Bahrain (GF)
18:30 New Delhi (RJ) 14:05 Cairo (MS)
18:30 Cairo (RJ) 14:40 Riyadh (SV)
18:30 Karachi, Dubai (RJ) 23:10 Damascus, Paris (AF)
18:30 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (RJ)
18:30 Montreal, New York (RJ)
18:10 London (RJ)
19:10 Frankfurt (RJ)
03:30 Madrid (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
13:20 Cairo (MS)
13:25 Riyadh (SV)
14:35 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (GF)
17:40 Dubai, Damascus (EK)
21:30 Paris, Damascus (AF)

DEPARTURES
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
08:00 Aqaba (RJ)
11:00 Tripoli (RJ)
12:00 Vienna, Frankfurt (RJ)
12:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:45 Madrid (RJ)
13:00 Rome, Paris (RJ)
13:15 Geneva, Brussels (RJ)
21:10 Jeddah (RJ)
21:30 Bahrain, Doha (RJ)
21:40 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:00 Cairo (RJ)
22:00 Doha (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)
09:15 Beirut (ME)

MARKET PRICES
Upper/lower price in fils per kg.
Apple 250 / 450
Banana 200 / 450
Banana (Mukammal) 450 / 400
Beans 300 / 220
Cabbage 100 / 60
Carrot 180 / 120
Cauliflower 120 / 80
Corn 200 / 150
Cucumbers (large) 150 / 100
Cucumbers (small) 150 / 280
Dates 300 / 400
Eggplant 200 / 150
Figs 200 / 300
Garlic 1400 / 1000
Grapes 350 / 450
Lemon 200 / 120
Mallow 180 / 120
Marrow (large) 120 / 80
Marrow (small) 220 / 170
Onion (dry) 240 / 180
Onion (green) 200 / 160
Okra 600 / 300
Orange 250 / 150
Pepper (hot) 200 / 160
Pepper (sweet) 120 / 80
Potato 220 / 150
Radish 150 / 100
Sage 700 / 600
Spinach 150 / 120
Tomatoes 220 / 160

Jordan appeals to U.N. to stop Israeli actions

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian government is seeking United Nations help to stop Jewish extremist groups from entering the Al Haram Al Sharif Monday under the pretext of holding a religious festival inside the shrine, and has instructed its representatives at the U.N. headquarters to make necessary contacts in this respect.

According to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Jordan has asked its ambassadors accredited to the capitals of the five permanent member states of the Security Council to "exert all their efforts to convince them (the five states) to reject such practices by Israel and to halt them."

"Such actions on the part of the Israelis and the extremist groups, are bound to result in a dangerous escalation of the situation in Arab Jerusalem and the occupied Arab territories," the agency said.

The agency said that the government had asked its representative at the United Nations, Abdullah Salah, to contact the U.N. permanent secretariat over the issue.

Members of the Temple Mount group said last Wednesday that on Monday they would enter the Islamic shrine where Israeli troops killed at least 20 Muslims in October. Al Haram Al Sharif encompasses the Dome of the Rock and Al Aqsa

Mosque, considered as Islam's third holiest shrines.

Petra quoted Palestine Ambassador here Al Tayeb Abdul Rahim as saying that the extremist Jewish groups' ultimate goal is to demolish Al Haram Al Sharif to set up the so-called Jewish temple. The group's intended sacrifice of the Islamic shrine in Jerusalem, represents one more link in a long chain of official Israeli policies aimed at Judaizing the Arab city of Jerusalem," the ambassador said.

The ambassador appealed to the world community to "help confront the Zionist moves, which are bound to cause further violence in the occupied Arab territories, moves backed by the U.S. government which tries to hinder the implementation of international legitimacy from doing justice to the Palestinian people."

Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat issued a statement about the intended Jewish group's moves, calling on the Arab and Muslim nations to "join forces and confront the enemies of the nation."

He appealed to Arab and Islamic parliaments, to find means to protect Al Haram Al Sharif from the practices of the Jewish groups in Jerusalem.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Thursday chairs the opening session of the symposium on the rights of the child and children's education under Christian and Islamic faiths which was held at Amman Philadelphia Hotel.

Prince Hassan: inter-faith dialogue aims at serving common interests

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said on Jordan Television Thursday night that the current dialogue between Muslims and Christians on education and the children's rights to education was a continuation of earlier seminars that aimed at consolidating Islamic-Christian endeavours to serve common interests.

Referring to the rights of children in the occupied Arab territories, he said that the symposium was a manifestation of the Christian and Islamic faiths' total rejection of the repression and injustice going on under Israeli occupation rule and of solidarity with the rights of the oppressed children of Palestine.

He said: "The issue of rights is

not one between Islam and Christianity. Human rights and the Islamic and Christian concept are international ones, but as you know, the world is waiting now for U.N. Security Council resolutions and for the decision of those countries with influence over the situation in the occupied Arab lands. What is important here is not the formal dialogue but rather the talk among intellectuals who are well experienced and who have faced human disasters in various regions of the world. This is a kind of moral pressure and the least that should be done on our part so as to help prevent further distortion of the image of this region which aspires to be genuinely involved in a just international humanitarian order. It

is regrettable to see the Arab and Muslim image distorted with the intention of causing confrontation. We can contain confrontation in various forms because right is bound to emerge triumphant."

Prince Hassan made the statement following the opening session of a symposium on the rights of the child and children's education under Christian and Islamic faiths which was held at Amman Philadelphia Hotel.

The three-day meetings were called for jointly by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan and Cardinal Francis Arinze president of the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue at the Vatican.

King, Islamic delegation review situation in Gulf

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein has reviewed the Gulf crisis and its developments with a visiting delegation representing the world's popular Islamic groups and said that the opportunity still existed for containing the Gulf crisis and solving it within the Arab framework.

"What is being sought at the moment is the commencement of an Arab-Arab dialogue to pave the ground for a proper dealing with the issue without any foreign intervention," the King said at a meeting with the delegation at the Royal Court Thursday evening.

King Hussein emphasised the Arab-Islamic popular role, at this dangerous stage, in helping confront and deal with the problems facing the Arab and Islamic worlds, and urged the delegation members to exert all their efforts to help bring about peace in the Gulf.

"The dangers that threaten the Arab and Islamic region are great and the people and the official leaderships shoulder serious responsibility towards safeguarding Arab and Islamic rights and dignity," the King said at the meeting with the

delegation whose members are now on a tour of Arab and Islamic capitals.

The king warned that a conflagration in the Gulf would be catastrophic and no party could emerge as victor.

He noted that other parties and other nations were not keen on protecting the Arab and Islamic nations' interests and rights which, he said, should be protected by the Arabs and the Muslims themselves.

Jordan, he said, will remain steadfast and will continue to adhere to its national stand; it will not be discouraged by the consequences as long as it is keen on safeguarding the Arab and Islamic interests.

King Hussein pointed out that the Jordanian people's feelings with regard to the Gulf crisis "are similar to those of all Arab and Muslim people living in an atmosphere of democracy and where human rights are respected and people have the right of expression."

"Lack of respect for the Arab and Muslim people's human rights is the cause for inter-Arab and inter-Muslim differences and the breach in the Arab and Islamic ranks," the King added.

He said: "We are greatly honoured in this country to remain steadfast, and we are confident that our nation will achieve its aspired goals."

He said that only through dialogue can the way be paved for a peaceful settlement to the Gulf crisis and added: "Our efforts could have succeeded long time ago had there been an Arab-Arab dialogue to solve the crisis."

The delegation leader, Dr. Mohammad Sharif, and several delegation members spoke at the meeting paying tribute to King Hussein's endeavours, voicing support for the Arab-Arab dialogue and wishing the Arab Nation success in its efforts to reach peace.

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Chief of the Royal Court Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and King Hussein's Political Advisor Adnan Abu Odeh were present at the meeting.

The Islamic delegation members Friday left for Baghdad to discuss the Gulf crisis with Iraqi leaders. They were seen off at the airport by Minister of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Ali Al Faqr and other officials.

Jordan, India to discuss trade ties

AMMAN (Petra) — An economic delegation led by Ministry of Industry and Trade Secretary General Ibrahim Badran left Amman Friday for New Delhi on a four-day visit to India to discuss ways of promoting Jordanian-Indian trade and economic relations.

The delegation, which represents Jordan's side to the Joint Jordanian-Indian Economic Committee, will review with the Indian side the existing economic cooperation agreement and will follow up the implementation of resolutions and recommendations reached at the committee's last meeting held in Amman, according to Badran.

"The meeting is designed to increase the volume of trade, change goods and to increase Jordan's exports of phosphate, potash and fertilisers to India in exchange for Indian goods," Badran said in a pre-departure statement at the Amman airport.

He said that the Jordanian delegation would seek to import raw materials for Jordanian food and pharmaceutical industries and would discuss joint ventures like the Jordanian-Indian project to produce phosphoric acid, and would pave the way for organising trade fairs for the two countries to promote the sale of national products.

Badran said that the Jordanian-Indian trade relations were progressing "satisfactorily." "Last September the two sides agreed at a meeting in Amman to increase and diversify trade between them," Badran added.

He said that last year Jordan sold \$170 million worth of products to India but bought goods "for far less value, making the

balance of trade heavily in Jordan's favour."

"The Jordanian government is now exerting special efforts to encourage Jordanian merchants to import more products from India, and has introduced special facilities to achieve that goal," Badran said.

Jordan, he added, is now importing 75 per cent of its needs of tea and 50 per cent of iron bars from Indian markets.

Badran said that Jordan had also been importing from India such items as meat, coffee, spices, seeds, chemical products, industrial commodities and wheat.

India, he added, is among the major consumers of Jordan's potash, which is processed as fertiliser for agricultural production, and the country annually imports around 1.6 million tonnes from Jordan and other countries.

Badran said that India bought a total of 326,000 tonnes of Jordanian potash in 1987, increasing the amount to 561,000 tonnes in 1988 and decreasing it to 413,000 tonnes in 1989; so far it has imported 431,000 tonnes during 1990.

Badran recalled that a delegation representing the Ministry of Supply had visited India recently and concluded a contract for the purchase of 100,000 tonnes of wheat which could be increased to 200,000 tonnes later.

Badran is accompanied by representatives of the Arab Potash Company (APC), the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC), the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce, the Amman Chamber of Industry and the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

Jordan, France sign loan protocol

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan's Ambassador to France Awad Al Khalidi signed an agreement for a soft loan of 100 million French francs (\$20 million) granted by the French Ministry of Finance in Paris on Dec. 10. The soft loan was negotiated in Paris on Nov. 21 by Dr. Michel Marto, deputy governor of the Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) and the French Ministry of Finance.

The loan was granted under favourable conditions for the duration of 15 years and with a seven-year grace period at an interest rate of 1.5 per cent, bringing out a grant element amounting to 56 per cent, of its total value.

The initial down payments of this loan which will be designated to finance the importation of French goods and services will occur within a short period of time.

With this financial assistance, France aims at improving the current situation of the Jordanian balance of payments.

Aid from France to Jordan, since 1977, amounts to two billion French francs (\$400 million).

crafts, jewelry, traditional items, children's clothes, flowers and other items made by voluntary societies and women running small income-generating projects.

The exhibition seeks to promote small businesses by giving them the opportunity to market their own products and to promote their production at the local level.

Taking part in the exhibition will be 28 small businesses.

FILM

WHAT'S GOING ON

AMMAN (J.T.) — Under the patronage of Her Majesty Queen Noor, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation's (NHF) women and development programme, in cooperation with Miras Centre's exhibitions section, Saturday organises a five-day exhibition of the women's production.

The exhibition, which will be held at Al Badia lounge at Jordan Intercontinental Hotel, will have on display ceramics, hand-

icrafts, jewelry, traditional items, children's clothes, flowers and other items made by voluntary societies and women running small income-generating projects.

The exhibition seeks to promote small businesses by giving them the opportunity to market their own products and to promote their production at the local level.

Taking part in the exhibition will be 28 small businesses.

German parliamentarian supports Arab solution based on compromise

By Ghadeer Taher
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — German Parliamentarian Hans-Juergen Wischnewski, who left for Baghdad Friday, said territorial compromise was an "important ingredient" for achieving a political settlement of the Gulf crisis.

Wischnewski, who is on a four-country Middle East tour to promote a peaceful solution to the conflict, stressed the "need for an Arab solution. He said that parallel to the U.S.-Iraqi talks, which he described as "a great opportunity that should be seized," other "opportunities have to be taken so that an Arab solution can be reached."

When asked if an Arab solution entailed territorial compromise, Wischnewski said it was "an important ingredient."

"It is extremely important

for the Arab states to take proper steps at the appropriate time," Wischnewski, chairman of the Middle East Committee of Socialist International, told a press conference Thursday after meeting His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

The parliamentarian commended Jordan's position and role in the crisis and said that "if all parties involved in the crisis had a comparable position to that of Jordan then a peaceful solution would be possible."

He refused to give details of his talks with King Hussein and Prince Hassan. The Jordan News Agency, Petra, said King Hussein explained Jordan's position on the crisis and the necessity for reaching a political settlement to it. The King told Wischnewski that an inter-Arab dialogue was necessary to "pave the way for a (peaceful) solution," Petra said.

"The position of Jordan is clear... it is interested in a peaceful solution which is also our position..." said Wischnewski, who is here on behalf of former German Chancellor Willy Brandt and at the request of the Iraqi leadership. The parliamentarian said he was following up talks he had with Iraqi officials in August and discussions Brandt held in November.

He said a peaceful resolution of the crisis "on the one hand implies following up United Nations resolutions, but at the same time to clearly see that there are more issues in the region that have to be solved." But, Wischnewski said the Gulf crisis must be solved "at the moment" in order to solve other problems in the region.

After Iraq, Wischnewski will visit Egypt, Saudi Arabia and he will meet with the Kuwaiti government in exile while in Saudi Arabia.

Jordan might restrict refugee entry in case war starts

AMMAN (R) — Jordan, severely strapped for cash as a result of trade sanctions against Baghdad and an influx of refugees, has hinted that it might be forced to close its border with Iraq if war broke out in the Gulf.

Such a move would trap thousands of would-be refugees in Iraq, whose August 2 invasion of Kuwait prompted an exodus of almost one million foreigners across the border into Jordan. Most of the refugees were Asian migrant workers and Egyptians.

"The lack of proper reimbursement for what we have paid to carry out a humanitarian issue of an international dimension is compelling us to be reluctant to receive a new wave of people if war breaks out," a senior government official told Reuters.

He did not elaborate but said the government would soon evaluate its options before the January 15 U.N. Security Council deadline for Iraq to leave Kuwait or face attack.

Jordan closed its border with Iraq for almost two days in August because it could not cope with the wave of refugees. Since

then it has been the only country bordering Iraq to keep its frontier fully open.

Syria has allowed in only a trickle of refugees from Iraq while Turkey and Iran severely restricted entry to people wanting to leave.

Relief officials say the possible closure of air space over the region if war broke out would trap evacuees in Jordan, further depleting the nation's limited food and medical supplies.

Salameh Hamad, head of a ministerial evacuation committee, said lack of money would prevent his task force from carrying out a contingency plan to deal with a sudden influx of 150,000 refugees flooding into Jordan in case of war.

The plan would lay the groundwork for providing food, water, accommodation and transport for refugees and would ensure that people fleeing across the border were returned to their home countries as quickly as possible.

The plan was endorsed by Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, the personal envoy of U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de

Cuellar on Gulf refugees in October, a month after he visited Amman.

"We have not received a single penny to start any preparations for the plan," Hamad told Reuters. "The committee has no money to cover the cost of its previous operation or to begin any preparations as envisaged in the plan," he added.

He said Jordan would need at least an initial \$1.5 million to buy basic supplies such as blankets and tents.

Hamad's team borrowed more than \$43 million from the cash-strapped Jordanian government to help refugees who streamed across the border after the invasion.

So far it has only received about \$12 million in compensation, mainly from the European Community, the United Nations Disaster and Relief Organisation (UNDR) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM).

Jordan's economy has also been devastated by the cost of implementing U.N. sanctions against Iraq, its former main trading partner.



A rally Friday commemorates the third anniversary of the establishment of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and the 23rd anniversary of the Arab Liberation of Palestine (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan).

Rally marks intifada, PFLP anniversary

By Sana Atiyeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Thousands of people gathered at a public rally Friday to commemorate the third anniversary of the Palestinian intifada and the 23rd anniversary of the establishment of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP).

The organisation's deputy secretary-general addressed the rally and called for strengthening Jordanian-Palestinian unity and the Palestinian national unity in the confrontation with Israel.

Abu Ali Mustafa, also an executive committee member of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), called for strong Arab unity to confront both Israel and the United States in their "battle with Iraq."

"We have to realise that we have a responsibility towards those who have sacrificed their lives and blood for the objectives of the intifada; and our strongest weapon is that of national unity, which we must protect and develop," Mustafa told a cheering crowd of about 7,000.

He called on strengthening Palestinian national unity, saying it was the strongest weapon to confront Israel.

"All nationalists, including the religious trends such as Hamas, must participate in the leadership of the struggle; but we must unite on a political basis, not a religious one," Mustafa stressed.

He asked the crowd: "Is it not enough that our common enemy, Israel, should unite us? Is not our aim of independence one? Is Jerusalem not enough reason for unity? Isn't the name of Palestine enough to unite us?"

Mustafa also praised Jordan and its leadership for the position it has taken on the Gulf crisis "despite the price it paid." He added that the Kingdom's democratic process has made Amman the "capital of resistance."

"Let our weapons remain in the same trench. The Palestinians in Palestine are fighting for Jordan as Jordanians are fighting for Palestine and Palestinians," Mustafa said.

He reiterated the PFLP's support of Iraq in its confrontation with the U.S. and its allies. He said that Iraq's battle

was a battle for all Arabs wanting to be independent of American hegemony.

"So let us hold high the banner of 'no to America, no to colonialism' — the key to Arab renaissance," Mustafa said. "Let's face it, even if President Saddam withdraws from Kuwait, the Americans will follow him to Baghdad to destroy his country and its strong capabilities because they simply don't want any Arab country to emerge powerful, especially if it does not follow their own rules and regulations. They want the entire Arab World toothless."

Mustafa also called on escalating the armed struggle against Israel as support to the intifada and to help it achieve its aims: Freedom and independence.

He rejected United Nations Security Council Resolution 242, which calls for Israeli withdrawal from Arab territories it occupied in 1967, saying it has become "an illusion we are running after and which only serves the interests of Israel."

"We accepted the worst, and the worst did not accept us," Mustafa said, quoting an Arab proverb, and referring to the PLO's recognition of Israel and its diplomatic efforts to solve the Palestinian problem through international legitimacy.

However, he commended the efforts of the PLO to find a political solution to the Palestinian question, but stressed that armed struggle against Israel was still necessary as part of the fight for independence and that it would continue until Palestinian independence was achieved.

"Palestine is from the river to the sea," said Mustafa as the crowd cheered and youth chanted: "Give us arms, we want to fight for Palestine."

Soviet Jews

He criticised the Soviet Union for allowing Soviet Jews to migrate to Palestine and "watching the immigrants settling in Palestine." But he warned Israel that Palestinians would not sit by and watch their land being taken by the Jewish immigrants, and ignore Israeli expansionism.

"Shamir should know that the bullets and knives of our people will eat away the flesh of the new immigrants," Mustafa shouted through the microphone.

Jordanian and Palestinian flags and large banners hung on the walls of a car exhibition hall on the University road, as well as pictures of South American freedom fighter Che Guevara and PFLP Secretary-General George Habash. A group of enthusiastic youth on the right side of the stage continuously chanted anti-American and pro-Palestinian and pro-Jordanian slogans as speakers tried to be heard.

"The right always give us trouble," commented Mustafa humouredly, referring to the chanting youth on his right. Also speaking at the rally marking the two occasions were Deputy Deeb Marji speaking on behalf of the Jordanian Popular Democratic Unity Party (the organisers of the rally), Communist Deputy Issa Mdanat and Abbas Zaki from the central committee of Fatah.

In his short speech, Marji described the intifada as Jordan's first defence line against Israeli expansionism.

"Therefore, we must give them (Palestinians) the fullest support possible. Our loyalty to our people in Palestine is unquestionable, because in Jordan we are participating in the fight against Zionism and imperialism, expansionism," Marji said.

Mdanat said that Amman has become a minaret for democracy and centre of the Arab struggle for independence from imperialism. He also called for further strengthening national unity in Jordan.

"The imperialists were betting on Jordan to be the place of their conspiracies against the Arab Nation. But they have lost their bet. And we must struggle together to maintain and develop our national unity towards a progressive and nationalist democratic Jordan to support the Palestinian struggle for independence," Mdanat said.

Zaki said that this was the time to take the opportunity to strengthen the Jordanian-Palestinian and Palestinian national unity, and said that the gaps have grown much narrower.

"We have two weapons to carry: Iraq and the legendary steadfastness of our people fighting against the enemy," Zaki said.

Jordan Times

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Extremism has price

THERE IS little doubt that the fourth year of the Palestinian intifada will be different from its first three years. What began as a non-violent uprising has recently escalated into a wave of knife attacks against Israelis, and bomb throwing and gun firing on Israeli military targets. There is a clear signal in this escalation: After three years of passive resistance and non-violent struggle the Palestinian people under occupation in the West Bank and Gaza Strip are fast losing patience yet hope that a solution is not far away. With the eyes of the world ever more focused away from the occupied territories and the major powers within the international community refusing to establish even a loose link between the Palestinian problem and with that of Kuwait, the Palestinians must have concluded that only by raising the stakes would they have a chance of luring back interest in and concern for their plight with its decades of national grievances. This does not suggest that the Palestinian escalation will be answered by Israel or that it could be carried on without retaliation. There will surely be a price that the Palestinians would have to pay for the institution of a more militant intifada. A violence-oriented uprising would surely take a toll on our people under occupation in terms of lives, suffering and economic losses. For three long years they have constantly and deliberately abstained from resorting to systematic violence against their antagonists in the occupied territories. Now, however, it seems the two sides are about to enter a new phase in their confrontation. A clear signal from Israel to give hope to the Palestinian people that a settlement is in the horizon would go a long way to placate them and cause them to forsake this seemingly imminent escalation. Seen against this backdrop, the inability of the U.N. Security Council to take any stand on the problem over two months only offers additional proof that any further investment on the Palestinians' part in a non-violent uprising would be utterly useless. While Tel Aviv and Washington are directly responsible for the Council's inaction, the rest of its members cannot escape responsibility. By having the Soviet Union, of all countries, act as an accomplice for the U.S. and be the very instrument that pleads for indecision by the Council shows the extent to which its permanent members are willing to go to appease the U.S.-Israeli combine. Not that any resolution being contemplated by the Council along these lines would offer any real panacea. Still the indecisiveness of the international community as represented in the Council would only add to the Palestinian sense of desperation. To them, it is one thing to reject an affirmative and positive link between their problem and that of the Gulf, and quite another to insist on a negative link as the U.S. seeks to do. By refusing to even mention the proposal for a peace conference on the Arab-Israeli conflict in the projected resolution because of the Gulf crisis, the U.S. is simply establishing that negative link between them. This may be pure and simple politics for the U.S. For us, however, it is a gory logic that will never be accepted.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THE United States seems to be determined to fight anyone who tries to reduce its domination over the Gulf issue, and therefore it is now intent on resisting any attempts to initiate an Arab-Arab dialogue designed to bring about a settlement, said Al Ra'i daily. For this reason, one can rule out the possibility of witnessing Washington instigating Arab parties to resist and also about all attempts aimed at involving Arab countries in a serious dialogue that would open the way for reconciliation, and later a lasting settlement for the Gulf issue, the paper said. Arab leaderships like those of Jordan and Algeria are quite aware of America's intentions, and they are making serious moves now to confront Washington's course of action in this respect, and determined to open the door wide for an Arab-Arab dialogue to achieve the aspired objective, the paper noted. It said that Arab masses attach great hopes to the Jordanian-Algerian efforts because they are intended to help the Arab states assume the initiative once again and attain a just and lasting settlement to the crisis. Should Algeria and Jordan succeed where others failed so far, they would have achieved a major victory for the Arab nation which is confronted by the U.S.-Israeli alliance that is poised to strike at the Arab World to deny the Arab nation the chance of achieving strategic parity with the Jewish state.

A columnist in Al Ra'i daily launches a strong attack on the United States for trying to find different excuses to abort the dialogue which it suggested to hold with Iraq. When Washington announced its initiative for the dialogue, the world public opinion was impressed, and everyone thought that it would finally defuse tension and bring to an end the danger of war in the Gulf region, says Bader Abdul Haq. But he says, people's expectations were short-lived having heard Washington expressing more interest in the date of the dialogue rather than the dialogue itself and its results. Such an attitude on the part of U.S. administration leaves little doubt about President Bush's intentions, that he meant to exploit the idea of a dialogue with Iraq to gain more time to complete his readiness for war and finalise the military buildup before launching a strike on Iraq, says the writer. He notes that Washington's insistence on fixed dates that are more convenient for the U.S. administration, but not for Iraq is an open attempt to procrastinate and abort the dialogue which is supposed to be a way out of the present deadlock. Now, the writer points out, the United States is showing its teeth and showing disregard to the settling the Gulf crisis through the projected dialogue now that the foreign nationals have been allowed to leave. He notes that Washington is taking a more adamant position at a time when the Israeli prime minister is visiting the United States, and the new attitude is clearly intended to appease Israel which does not want to see Iraq coming out of this crisis intact.

Major opens doors for winds of change

By David Storey
Reuter

LONDON — Britain's new Prime Minister John Major has opened the door to a gust of new thinking in the British government, loosening the ideological grip of his predecessor Margaret Thatcher.

Politicians and commentators said the 47-year-old Major was replacing Thatcher's reliance on confrontation with a reversion to consensus, a concept she reviled. "Suddenly, the air is alive with the sound of rethinking," wrote commentator Paul Barker in the Sunday Times.

But it is not yet clear whether Major, catapulted to the leadership by a palace coup against Thatcher last month, is actively espousing the role of the listening leader or simply lacks sufficient authority to impose his own will.

"The public has been accustomed to equating leadership with strength," said Thatcher biographer Hugo Young. "The Thatcher years are ultimate proof that masochism remains a very British virtue."

While Thatcher's known prejudices had determined the course of government argument, Major is an enigma. "Nobody is very clear of what he thinks, except that he will make a virtue of not thinking it alone," Young said.

Already, ministers say, he has restored a sense of collective cabinet decision-making undermined by his autocratic predecessor.

The caring face of Conservative government is making a comeback.

"The conditions of the people, a traditional Tory (Conservative) concern, is back where it belongs on the agenda after a decade of social Darwinism," wrote the Independent's political editor Peter Jenkins.

Major's personal style has begun to emerge in his responses to the two issues that finally toppled Thatcher — European Community (EC) integration, which she hotly opposed, and the "poll tax," which she doggedly espoused.

Senior officials said there would be no immediate revision of Britain's policy on EC monetary and political union, but the way it was put over would change. The language of opposition would be replaced with positive words of cooperation and involvement. Thatcher's defiant cry in parliament last month of "no, no, no" to being dragged into Europe would not be repeated.

One senior government official last week said such "odd" language would fade away as Major, one of the authors of Britain's own proposals for monetary union as chancellor of the exchequer (finance minister), took full political charge. The new approach would become clear at an EC summit in Rome on Friday, the official said, when British ministers would be "searching for the sort of treaty they could sign up to."

Major, acutely aware that splits in the Conservative Party over the pace of EC union caused Thatcher's undoing, has carefully to balance his instincts for solid European participation with the gut nationalism that infuses many in his party. His stand on the poll tax, a

system of raising local government funds that caused riots when implemented this year, revealed a similar concern to abandon the ideological approach of Thatcher.

In a gesture that contrasted with years of bitter political confrontation, Major offered to draw the opposition Labour Party into a general discussion on the best way to fund local councils and their relationship with central government.

Major has shown his commitment to the substance of Conservative policy, including radical reforms of the education and health systems, further privatisation of state-owned industry and a rigid hold-down on public expenditure.

But politicians believe he may be less dogmatic than Thatcher, perhaps accepting a higher level of central intervention in areas where market forces were left in sole charge.

Although he only changed a few of Thatcher's government appointments, Major has insisted he is his own man.

To head the prime minister's policy unit he chose a distinguished economic journalist, Sarah Hogg, best known not for her prejudices or ideals but for her painstaking and impartial analysis.

The choice of Hogg, a member of one of the most distinguished families in the British establishment, struck many political sources as ironic.

Major, a vaudeville performer's son who left school at 16, had made creation of a classless society one of the goals of his prime ministership.



The stones cannot be quelled by a rain of bullets

By Robert Mahoney
Reuter

RAFAH CAMP, Gaza Strip

Ask a group of young Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied West Bank who has been shot and wounded by soldiers and a few hands go up. Put the same question to a group in the Gaza Strip refugee camp of Rafah and immediately everyone starts rolling up trousers and opening shirts to show off scars.

Rafah, a dusty grey sprawl of cinderblock houses of the Egyptian border, has the highest casualty rate of any of the 27 Palestinian camps.

Since the uprising, or intifada, against Israeli rule erupted three years ago Rafah has counted 58 deaths and some 4,500 injuries among its 55,172

refugees, according to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which runs the camp.

Nearly 1,800 have been shot with live rounds and 800 with plastic-coated metal bullets, UNRWA said. The other injuries were from rubber bullets, beatings by soldiers and teargas inhalation. More than 20 per cent of those killed in the Gaza Strip come from Rafah.

Not even the army's latest tactic — deploying snipers with orders to pick off stone-throwers by aiming for the legs — would deter the youngsters of Rafah.

Teenagers like Qasem take pride in being in the front line for the, by now routine, late afternoon stoning of Israeli troops. His zeal has cost him six bullet wounds.

"Being shot does not deter me," he boasted to nods of approval from other young activists around him who are known by the Arabic term shebab.

"All the time I go very close to the Israeli to throw stones," he said stroking the wool on his arm from a plastic bullet. Qasem, like all shebab, did not want his real name published.

Qasem's brother was killed in clashes and his baby sister is paralysed after having been shot.

Was vengeance for his family a motive for Qasem's determination? He recoiled, calling the question silly. "I was shot twice before my brother was killed...I do not hate the Jews more because of it."

"Since I was born I have

hated the Jews," he said referring to Israelis.

Qasem's life, his family, like many here, fled the area around Ashkelon when Israel was created in 1948.

Since leaving school he has just hung around the camp, jobless like his friends. He spent eight months in an Israeli jail for helping the Palestine Liberation Organisation Fatah group. That means he will not get an Israeli-issued identity card which would enable him to leave the Gaza Strip to work in Israel.

Unemployment, restrictions on movement, politicisation by Palestinian nationalists and presence of Israeli soldiers have turned Rafah into a hot-house for activists.

Toddlers even turn out, stones in hand, when an army patrol enters the camp.

Asked to explain Rafah's unenviable reputation for casualties, Qasem and his friends are only sure about one thing, the army patrols are to blame.

"They come in here every day," he said. "They know we will stone them...they do it to provoke us."

But the army enters other camps too without inflicting so many injuries. One reason for the intensity of the clashes is that the shebab in Rafah are better organised than elsewhere, Palestinian relief workers and journalists say.

The Shin Bet secret police have had less success here in cracking the political committees which run the intifada than in other camps, they say. "It is also easier to escape across the border (to Egypt)

from Rafah if you are wanted," one activist noted.

Another reason for the number of shebab is poverty. Fourteen per cent of families here are classed by UNRWA as hardship cases — those who do not have enough money for food and clothing — compared with seven per cent in other camps.

All this is known to Hamzeh, 17, who has been shot three times, but his explanation is the standard shebab line.

"Maybe we fight harder than the others, maybe not...all I know is that people want their freedom...otherwise why should I throw stones? To entertain myself?" he asked. "We throw stones to express our suffering...we want independence."

Aquino continues to fight

By Jeremy Clift
Reuter

MANILA — Philippine President Corason Aquino, dismissing a chorus of demands that she resign, is fighting back against one of the toughest crises confront her troubled presidency.

Aquino, a tough-willed widow who has survived six coup attempts, has managed to blunt popular outrage over an oil price increase last week that put pump prices up by 153 per cent.

She helped undercut a proposed national strike by twice modifying the increase in oil prices, so that the overall average rise is now 33 per cent, instead of 45 per cent.

She has also won time by replacing her disliked executive secretary, Catalino Macaraig, with transport secretary Oscar Orbes, a boyishly handsome man who many politicians expect will bring a new vitality to the post of Aquino's chief-of-staff and leading policy adviser.

Political commentator Amando Doronila said it was too late for deep-rooted reforms, but "there is at least the prospect of a change of pace and style."

The government has partially dodged responsibility for the painful rise in energy prices by blaming Iraqi President Saddam Hussein and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which had pressed for the scrapping of subsidies on oil.

Aquino, swept to power in a popular revolt which ousted the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986, has vowed to make further cabinet changes to replace ineffective ministers

and is pressing congress to pass needed tax measures.

Politicians said the crisis was potentially the most damaging of her almost five years in power because the sharp rise in prices hits directly at her most loyal supporters.

Critics have been swift to exploit her difficulties, suggesting it would be better for the country that she step down than continue the present period of ineffective government.

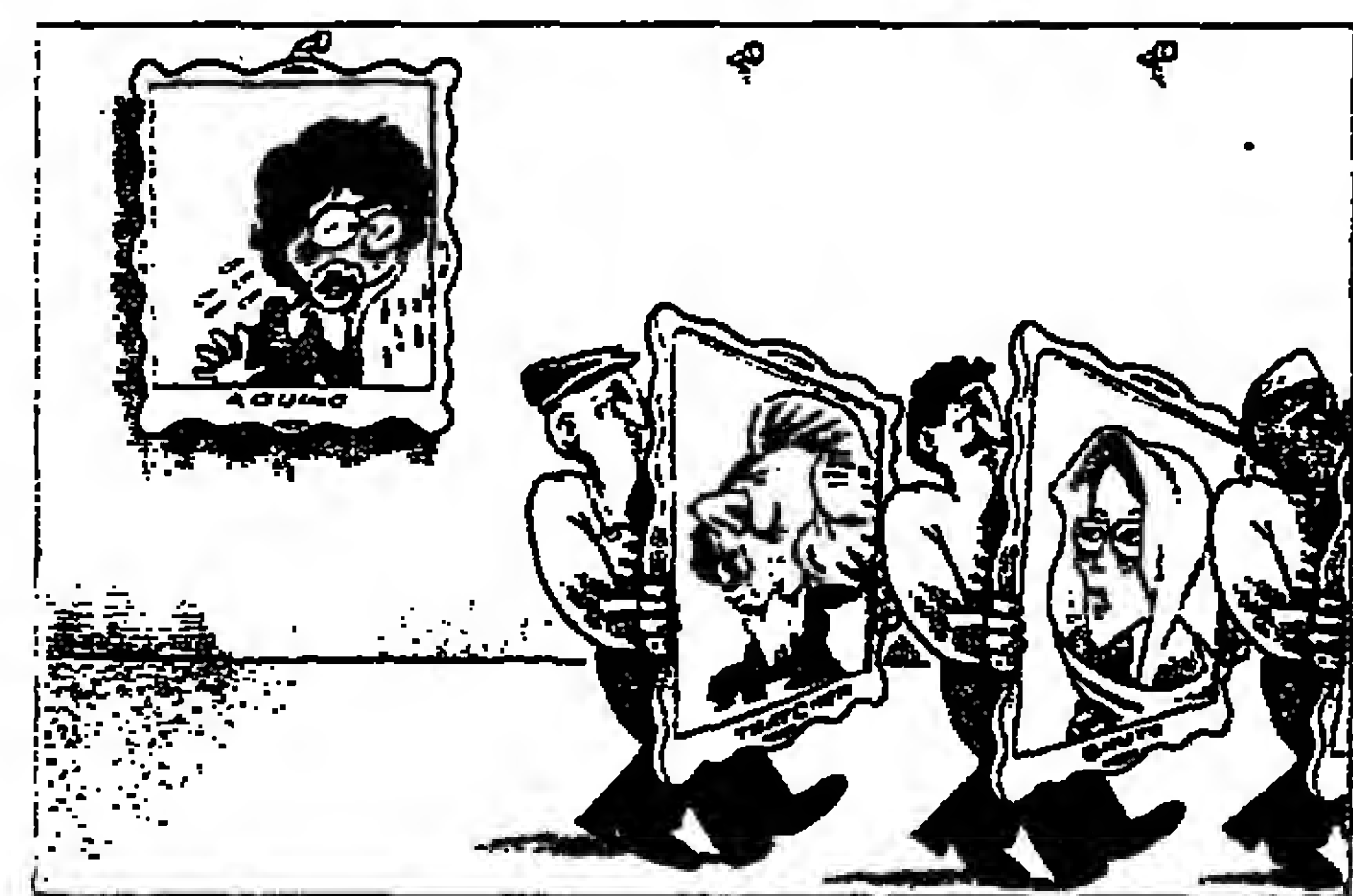
"The Aquino fairytale of 1986 is turning out to be the horror story of the '90s," said Aquino's estranged cousin, Eduardo Cojuangco, a prominent businessman and former friend of Marcos.

"People believe that this government, which has run out of ideas, run out of money and is running out of time, is in itself the problem," he said in a speech to Manila businessmen on Tuesday that many took to be a signal he will run in 1992 presidential elections.

Senator John Osmena, a member of a leading political families, suggested that presidential and congressional elections should be brought forward by a year, to next May.

"The constitutionally mandated elections are 18 months away (and) the prospects, therefore, are a drift for another 18 months — leaderless and aimless — which we can ill afford," Osmena said.

The sense of drift became so pervasive that three were calls this week for Defence Secretary Fidel Ramos to arrest Finance Secretary Jesus Estanislao, "for economic sabotage."



Ramos rejected the suggestion, saying: "The situation does not call for martial law or a declaration of a state of emergency."

"The economic problem started to magnify during the July 16 earthquake and intensified because of the Gulf crisis after the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq and the consequence of higher oil prices," he explained.

Aquino has gone from one crisis to another during 1990, opening the year with the economy weakened by a coup attempt last December and then being hit by a succession of natural disasters and the dramatic rise in world oil prices in August.

Army rebels have threatened to launch a fresh coup but Ramos and military commanders insist the dissi-

dents can no longeroust Aquino.

Whatever the scale of the problems, Aquino is stoically refusing to step down, saying she is determined to provide the firm leadership needed to get the country through the next 18 months.

Crucial for the country will be whether Aquino and Congress can agree before the new year on measures to raise money and reduce government spending.

Without this programme, economists and businessmen say, it is unlikely the IMF will agree to further credits, and without the IMF's seal of approval other major Western donors are holding up more than two billion dollars in assistance that would help keep the economy afloat.

Coalition

(Continued from page 1)

Some coalition members attributed the deadlock to possibilities that their colleagues who did not attend were mostly in favour of joining the Badran cabinet.

"I would imagine that some of those who did not attend had legitimate reasons," said one deputy. "But I believe others wanted to avoid the embarrassment of the vote," added the deputy, who said he advocates setting up a new government. "It is remarkable that on this particular issue, even the Muslim Brotherhood is clearly divided," he added.

Some members of the coalition have argued against joining the government in a "limited reshuffle." They are willing to participate if it is a new government "with or without Badran."

An independent member of the coalition, who argued in favour of joining the government "in a wide reshuffle," said that Jordan's "position cannot tolerate forming a new government with new policies and programmes."

Zoubi, who withheld confidence in Badran's government last January, said that most coalition members differed with the government's programme and its position vis-a-vis issues such as the Palestinian problem, the decision to disengage from the West Bank, martial law, and agreements signed with the International Monetary Fund.

Another deputy said that many members of the coalition believed that after the events of Aug. 2, they could not support the government programme, "hence the demand for the new agenda by the cabinet," he said.

The pan-Arab nationalists and independents in the coalition who did not give their vote of confidence in Badran's government last year "prefer to push

for setting up a new government, with or without Badran, rather than have a limited reshuffle that would not change very much," said an independent deputy in the group.

Coalition sources said the pan-Arab nationalists and independents were dismayed that Badran held negotiations only with the Muslim Brotherhood and excluded the other partners in the coalition.

Informed sources said that the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood had asked for five portfolios for itself and at least three for coalition partners during negotiations with the premier.

One observer said that the prime minister appears to have successfully split the coalition by "striking deals with some of its members, confident that their desire for a cabinet post was stronger than their drive to keep the coalition."

After the apparent breakup of the coalition, deputies and observers expect the Muslim Brotherhood and individual members of the coalition to join the cabinet in a reshuffle expected by Thursday.

Bush

(Continued from page 1)

congressional committee Friday that he saw no sign that Iraq planned to comply with a U.N. resolution demanding it pull out from Kuwait.

The United States says nearly one million Iraqi and U.S. and allied troops are now massed — about evenly divided — in and near Kuwait.

The Iraqi Foreign Ministry, in a statement carried Thursday by the Iraqi News Agency, said that Iraq would abide by a Washington-set date for the Axis trip if the United States would agree to let Iraq set the time of Baker's visit to Baghdad.

Drive carefully! Traffic can be hazardous

'Would you go on holiday to a country where you need a gas mask?'

By Eileen Alt Powell
The Associated Press

BETHLEHEM, Occupied West Bank — In the season of Christmas pilgrimages by Christians from around the world, the town where Jesus was born has nothing but room at its inns.

Mayor Elias Freij looks out the window of his office onto the deserted square at the Church of the Nativity.

"Tourists? what tourists?" he asks rhetorically, sweeping an arm toward the emptiness. "This is the worst situation in my memory."

"With the drums of war beating in the Saudi desert and the large armada assembling in the Gulf, people are simply too scared to come here," says Freij, a Greek Orthodox Palestinian who has been mayor for 18 years.

He said "the last straw" was Israel's decision in October to distribute gas masks in case of an Iraqi attack. "Would you go on holiday to a country where you need a gas mask?" Freij asked.

Israel has suffered an overall loss in tourism because of the Gulf crisis. Bethlehem and Arab East Jerusalem are especially affected because the crisis accompanies what usually is

their busiest season.

The government had predicted a record year in tourism, surpassing the previous high of 1.5 million visitors in 1987. Instead, tourist arrivals have declined by half since Iraq seized Kuwait on Aug. 2, said tourism ministry spokesman Yossi Shoval. He said the 1990 total would be 1.3 million at best.

Shoval said the ministry still was trying to woo Jewish religious groups and Christians pilgrims, but that Israel had canceled its overseas television advertising "until the Gulf situation improves."

"There will be Christians here for Christmas," he said. "The question is how many."

On a recent morning in Bethlehem, a single tour bus was parked in Manger Square. Its seven Italian passengers were alone in the underground grotto of the Church of the Nativity, kneeling at the silver star that marks the site of Christ's birth.

In normal times, pilgrims would be elbow-to-elbow in the church and the tiny grotto.

"Things are so bad that I am not earning enough to feed me and my wife," said Issa El-Boyalji, a man in his 70s who usually makes his living shingling

the shoes of pilgrims outside the church.

He has set aside his brass-inlaid shoeshine box and directs drivers into parking places around Manger Square, hoping they will give him small change for his efforts.

Traditional religious ceremonies are scheduled for the holidays. They will begin on Christmas Eve with the ceremonial arrival of the Roman Catholic Patriarch of Jerusalem and end with masses and Anglican choral services.

For the fourth year, Bethlehem will forgo street decorations and holiday receptions in sympathy with the Palestinians uprising in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, Freij said.

The revolt against Israeli occupation, which began in December 1987, has taken the lives of more than 770 Palestinians and 53 Israelis.

"With the confrontations, with the desperation, there is nothing to celebrate," the mayor said.

The drop in tourism has taken its toll on the economy of Bethlehem, a town of 10,000 people.

Freij says only one of the six hotels is operating and nearly all the 80 restaurants are closed. Scores of craftsmen



The proposal of Jerusalem at the rededication of the Ascension Church at Augusta Victoria

have been laid off at the 100 workshops that produce olive wood carvings and mother-of-pearl jewellery.

Tax collections have fallen off so much, Freij said, that municipal workers could not be paid in November.

Fahmi Nashashibi, secretary of the Arab Hotels Association in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, said he had closed two of his three hotels for pilgrims in East Jerusalem because more than half the Christmas bookings were canceled.

Even Nepal's tourism is affected by crisis

By Binaya Gurucharya
The Associated Press

KATMANDU, Nepal — Fewer tourists visited Nepal's ancient temples, snowy mountains and lush valleys in 1990, and officials blame trouble elsewhere in the world.

They say the Gulf crisis was the main problem. Last year was also a bad one for this Himalayan kingdom, largely because of a gasoline shortage caused by a trade dispute with neighbouring India.

"This year, you can find a hotel room anytime you want," said Surendra Shaky, manager of the Yak and Yeti Hotel in Katmandu, the capital. "Previously, you would have been lucky to find standing space."

Thousands of tourists changed plans this spring, when the country was in the grip of an uprising that brought democracy to Nepal by stripping King Birendra of near-absolute powers.

Hoteliers say 50 per cent of those who had booked rooms did not turn up during the year's second tourist season, which started in mid-September when the monsoon ended.

Most of the cancellations

came from the United States and Germany, Nepal's two major tourist markets in the West, they said.

"The Americans are big spenders, and they have not come to this part of the world because of fear of war in the Middle East," a hotel manager said, on condition of anonymity.

The State Department advised Americans they might become targets in South Asia, the Middle East and North Africa because of tensions in the Gulf, where U.S. forces were deployed after Iraq occupied Kuwait on Aug. 2.

Most air routes to Nepal pass over the Gulf region and many tourists want to avoid it, Nepalese officials said. In addition, air fares are rising because of higher fuel prices.

According to the tourism department, only 176,000 tourists have visited Nepal in 1990, compared to about 210,000 in 1989.

Anup Rana, owner of the Yellow Pagoda Hotel and president of the Hotel Association of Nepal, said reservations for October and November were down by 30 per cent from the same months in 1988.

One travel agent said he received cancellations from 160 tour groups of a single day in September. The agent, who asked not to be identified, said he fears many more in the coming months.

Trouble in neighbouring countries also affected Nepal's tourism because travellers usually buy holiday packages that include destinations in Nepal, India and Thailand.

A Muslim separatist movement in Kashmir, and class and sectarian violence in northern India contributed to the downturn this year, said Dipendra Purush Dhakal, director general of Nepal's tourism department.

Another tourism department official said bargain tickets offered by government-owned Royal Nepal Airlines had not helped. The reduced airfares tend to attract only low-budget tourists who stay in cheap hotels that charge less than \$5 a day, the official said.

Although pleasure travel is down, adventure tourists apparently are not affected. Trekking agencies are as busy as in other areas.

The walled in 'puritans' of Algeria

By Philip Shehadi
Reuters

BENI ISGUEN, Algeria — Nine hundred years after creating an oasis on the edge of the Sahara Desert, Algeria's Ibadite Muslims still cling to the strict moral code that earned them the epithet "Islam's puritans."

The walled city of Beni Isguen in the Mozab Valley, rising pyramid-like on a rock that overlooks a palm grove, protects a unique social order that has withstood centuries of often hostile outside rule.

Tourists flock from around the world to marvel at buildings that inspire the architect Le Corbusier while local businessmen renowned for their acumen jet to Algiers, Annaba and other northern cities to run shops and factories.

But a guardianship appointed by the mosque keeps night watch over the city's main gate and tourists are closely monitored. Women cover themselves with long white headscarves that they hold tight with a finger, revealing only one eye.

"Our social order is something we are proud of. It has proved its existence throughout 1,200 years," said Sheikh Abol Oqsim Abdulhamid, a leading religious figure.

"Many people see it as a model of what an Islamic society should be."

The Ibadites broke with mainstream Islam in the late seventh century, arguing that leadership of Muslims should be determined by consensus rather than heredity.

The sect, regarded as heretical by many orthodox Sunni Muslims, spread throughout North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula and its practices are still dominant in Oman.

The Mozabites are the last descendants of an Ibadite state

that ruled central North Africa for 130 years, based in what is now the city of Tiaret, until defeat by Fatimid Muslims in 909.

Western orientalists called the Mozabites "puritans" for their strict moral code and work ethic sharpened by centuries of struggle with the harsh desert climate.

Digging into sand and rock with crude stone and iron tools they created the biggest artificial oases in the Sahara, feeding palm groves with a network of irrigation canals and pumps.

The houses in Beni Isguen are pastel hues of blue, green, cream and pink. Above them towers a solitary, tapered mud and brick minaret overlooking the Mozab's other four cities.

Tiny window slits, arched doors and peep-holes protect family intimacy and keep out the sand that blows along the winding alleys. Terraces are walled so "no one sees you but God," says architect Yahia Babek.

"There are no hotels, restaurants or cafes. So visitors only come to see the sights, and they must be accompanied," says tourist guide Ibrahim Zergoun.

Local affairs are regulated by centuries-old mosque and village councils that have kept some autonomy throughout Turkish and French rule and since Algeria won independence in 1962.

Religious leaders say doctrinal differences with the Malekite school of Sunni Islam that prevails in Algeria are superficial.

But Ibadites pray differently and take a harsher view of those who do not pray or perform "good works."

They consider smoking a sin, saying it contravenes a Koranic injunction against anything that damages the health.

Koran school is mandatory and hard work is encouraged

from an early age — children get their first taste of commerce at a daily public auction that turns the main square of Beni Isguen into an arena of lively debate.

Auctioneers licensed by the mosque circle the cobbled square holding up used clothes and household items, shouting and orchestrating subtle nods and gestures from the bidders.

The arrival of multi-party democracy in Algeria worries the Berber-speaking Mozabites, who fear it could ignite longstanding ethnic tension with Arab tribes that share their valley.

Three people died in riots between Arabs and Mozabites last June in the nearby town of Berriane when Arabs contested the election victory of an independent Mozabite mayor.

The Mozabites blamed "agitators" in the opposition Islamic Salvation Front, a fundamentalist party that shares the Mozabite goal of an Islamic society but is dominated by ethnic Arab Malekites.

But last June's first free elections for local councils have given the Mozabites new autonomy to run their affairs and preserve their way of life.

"Our priority is the state of youth. We are facing an onslaught of foreign culture, from modern technology and television satellite dishes," said a leading Beni Isguen resident, Bouras El Hadji.

"We must educate our youth intellectually so they do not swallow just anything."

Uprising in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, IRNA said.

Rafsanjani told Iranian Television during Benjedd's visit there.

"The situation in the region is reaching a critical point and serious action is necessary..."

"We will review the results of his talks so far in his tour and then, God willing, we will take a joint action to save the region from the danger of war."

IRNA said Benjedd decried what he called indifference to the crisis and was "confident that such visits would help bring closer the views of the opposing sides."

Iran, which fought a war with Iraq from 1980 to 1988, says Baghdad should completely withdraw from Kuwait and U.S.-led foreign forces ranged against Iraq should also leave the Gulf.

Tehran has stepped up its diplomatic activity over the Gulf crisis with Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati due to fly to Moscow over the weekend to meet on the heels of a visit to Turkey.

Rafsanjani said he and Benjedd also reviewed actions of Israel against Palestinians and discussed the role Muslim states should play in the Palestinian

Crown Prince

(Continued from page 1)

You know of course as Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz said to the CNN, there is a regional dimension but at the same time I think that is an issue which is being addressed in the ongoing discussion in the Security Council and they refer to the Palestinian question.

Q: Is this the initial step in what King Hussein has lately called the Arab-Arab solution?

A: I think the consultations between His Majesty and Benjedd could be a first step. Clearly all parties have to talk and you notice those countries aligned with the military buildup in the Gulf meeting in Cairo on the one side and Arab visitors to Baghdad on the other, including His Majesty, President Benjedd, the Yemenis, the Palestinians. At some stage I think that has to be hypenated if a contribution is to be made.

Q: The Jordanian prime minister has been quoted today as saying the U.S. has deliberately tried to disrupt any Arab-Arab dialogue. Is that a statement you agree with?

A: I think that there is a lot of suspicion in the U.S. over Arab-Arab dialogue and somehow the position of the alliance will be undermined and I think that this suspicion is at the end of the day unfounded because all countries in the region clearly oppose illegal annexation and the occupation by war. This is very clearly stated. Although the Arab contribution is not to undermine the international legitimacy but to boost it and to contribute to it. We hope the international community will reciprocate the same trust in contributing to regional problem-solving and in particular the case of Palestine.

In another interview with CBS television, the Crown Prince stressed that an Arab solution to the Gulf crisis does not contradict U.N. Security Council resolutions, but will help the process of implementing them.

"I think that the problem at the beginning has been one of isolation and this is why we took heart at the possibility of discussion in Baghdad and in Washington and we, as Arabs, wanted desperately to have the opportunity of speaking directly to the parties involved; it is to say the Saudis, the Kuwaitis and the Iraqis. Meetings were held in Baghdad and in Cairo recently; Arab meetings of countries supporting the alliance or Arab countries that have not done so. I think that if there is a problem of communication, it is very important for Arabs to help in resolving that problem if it exists. And I certainly think that there is a problem of isolation in Iraq."

In reply to another question, he said: "I think that this point of intimidation and threats can go too far. The Iraqis I think are thoughtfully well aware of the force buildup but when you don't leave an opportunity for creative thinking I think that it is very clear that we are heading at the end of this bleak tragedy toward disaster."

This is why I think whether King Hussein or President Chadi of Algeria or the many persons who visited Baghdad should be given some credibility in trying to see a way through to resolution of that paragraph which demands as I reminded you earlier direct Iraqi-Kuwait negotiations.

"I think that if the first meeting between Tariq Aziz and the president is the first step, then there will be a reflection within the region and let us hope that Secretary Baker's visit to Baghdad will not then just be to serve sentence and deliver the message. It really depends very much that behind those strong statements there is a readiness to give on both sides and to start the process, to implement withdrawal, to implement Resolution 660 which leads to direct negotiations between Iraq and Kuwait."

3 Israelis

(Continued from page 1)

Paramilitary border police poured into Jaffa to reinforce police coping with crowds of angry Jews. The rioters besieged a coffee shop where an Arab had taken refuge and set a car with a Gaza license plate ablaze.

Details of the killings remained unclear. According to Israeli Radio the bodies were discovered by a secretary and a worker who came to the factory and found its gates locked.

After breaking in and discovering the first body, that of the woman secretary, they summoned a police officer and found two more bodies. The radio said one of the men was a factory worker; another apparently rushed in from a nearby upholstery shop upon hearing the vic-

tim's cries.

A witness who did not give his name told the radio he saw on man "lying on the steps, folded like a bag... the knives were thrown near the body, long knives with wide blades, real commando knives."

Israeli right-wingers seized on the killing to demand tougher measures to prevent Arab attacks on Jews.

Science Minister Yuval Neeman of the far-right Tehiya party said that "unless drastic measures are taken, it will be hard to prevent spontaneous Jewish revenge operations."

Legislator Rehovam Zeevi of the Moleket movement which advocates expulsion of Arabs from the occupied territories, arrived to the scene but was held at a distance by police.

Terner said his men were looking for two brothers from the Gaza Strip.

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Sampras, Chang advance to Grand Slam Cup semis

MUNICH, Germany (AP) — American Pete Sampras expects to play Goran Ivanisevic a lot in the future. He is probably hoping that it won't always be as tough as it was in the inaugural Grand Slam Cup.

Sampras, the U.S. Open champion, battled for 2 hours, 21 minutes before overcoming the tall Yugoslav 7-6, 6-7, 8-6 Thursday to reach the semifinals of the \$6-million Grand Slam Cup.

American Michael Chang beat France's Henri Leconte 7-6, 6-3 to also advance to the semifinals, assuring himself, like Sampras, of at least \$150,000.

In Friday's two remaining quarterfinals, Brad Gilbert plays Aaron Krickstein and Ivan Lendl, the top seed left in the 16-player tournament, faces American David Wheaton.

Sampras and Ivanisevic, both 19, thrilled the crowd with their hard-hitting, big-serving games that also produced delicate volleys and sizzling passing shots. They were given a standing ovation by about 8,000 fans in Munich's Olympic Hall after their memorable duel.

With neither looking close to scoring a service break, Sampras produced two great passing shots to take an edge in the tiebreak and won the first set.

He finally scored the first service break in the 11th game of the second set, serving for the match. Sampras dropped his serve for the first time, hitting a volley into the net at break point.

Ivanisevic went on to win the tiebreak and level the score. In the third set, Sampras fought off a break in the third game and then four more in the ninth. Had the American lost the serve, Ivanisevic would have been serving for the match.

"I thought I had him, but he served very well on big points," Ivanisevic said. "The third set was pure luck."

Sampras agreed. "I shouldn't have gotten into that situation," he said. "I made some simple errors and I could have lost the match."

"I'm sure I'll be playing Goran a lot in the future. I tried not to get into a slugfest match with him, because that's not how I would win."

"I tried a few lobs, a few passing shots, a few volleys. You have to mix it against him."

The two are now 1-1 in career meetings.

Chang, who upset top-seeded Stefan Edberg of Sweden in the first round, was far too steady for the flashy Leconte, who also committed nine double-faults.

With both players dropping their serve twice in the opening set, Chang won the tiebreak 7-3. Chang was broken again in the third game of the second set, but broke back immediately, beginning a four-game surge that saw him break his French opponent again in the sixth game and eventually build an insurmountable 5-2 lead.

Sampras has yet to register his remarkable rise in tennis in his mind. But the aches and pains of a successful year are already plaguing his body, at the tender age of 19.

In September, Sampras became the youngest man to win the U.S. Open title, but painful shins that have been hampering his game ever since are turning into his biggest worry for the future.

"I am still a little bit in awe about winning the U.S. Open," Sampras said. "I don't yet realize fully what I accomplished."

"But here I am, 19 years old, and I'm hurt. It isn't looking very positive. I want to play the sport for as long as my body can take it. I kind of overplayed this year because I didn't expect to do so well."

Sampras also developed a painful blister on his right foot and had problems getting it treated during the quarter-final against Ivanisevic, which lasted nearly two-and-a-half hours.

The Californian hurried during a changeover to take a dressing off the blister, hoping he would get an extra three-minute time-out to replace the bandage.

"The problem was the rules say there has to be blood on things like that for you to get the extra three minutes," Sampras said. "So I had to play through it."

He said his feet and legs felt sore during the third set. But the American, who is determined to retain next year, said he put the aches and pains to the back of his mind.

Asked if he had felt the effects of a tiring year towards the end of the match, he said: "I wasn't thinking about the year. You can't think about things like that in a match."

Sampras plans to return to his Californian home in Rancho Palos Verdes to rest after the Munich event, before beginning his build-up to next month's Australian Open.

Lendl beats Bergstrom

In other matches Ivan Lendl sped through his first round match against Swede Christian Bergstrom Wednesday to guarantee himself at least a \$300,000 cheque.

Lendl, who has already earned nearly \$17 million in his phenomenal career, won 6-4 6-0 in 71 minutes and looks determined to add another \$2-million by winning the tournament.

Several top players, including German Boris Becker and American John McEnroe, declined to take part in the tournament, saying the prize money was too high.

McEnroe accused the organizers of trying to make "money whores" of the players.

World number four Andre Agassi also criticized the event, run by the International Tennis Federation (ITF), before producing a doctor's certificate saying he was injured and could not honour his contract to play.

Agassi's withdrawal proved lucky for his replacement in the 16-man draw, fellow American Brad Gilbert, who beat sixth seed Jonas Svensson 2-6 6-3 6-4 to reach the quarter-finals.

Lendl, reigning Australian Open champion, will play American David Wheaton, a three-set winner over crowd favourite Yannick Noah of France, in the quarter-finals.

After an early exchange of breaks with Bergstrom on the carpet court, Lendl settled into his rhythm and exploited a run of errors by the Swede to break him again and go 5-4 up.

Lendl served out to love for the set, helped by two aces, and immediately went on the attack in the second set, breaking Bergstrom to love in the first game.

With Edberg knocked out by Chang Tuesday, Lendl must have high hopes of taking the top prize.

The money was also on Wheaton's mind as the Australian Open quarter-finalist battled to keep his concentration in the face of Noah's on-court antics.

Africa to have 3rd team in World Cup

ZURICH (AP) — Africa will have a third team in the 1994 World Cup and North and Central America and the Caribbean could have a third team, too. Soccer's world governing body has decided.

The Executive Committee of the Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA) met for the first time since last summer's World Cup and rejected Asia's bid for a third spot.

It also banned Iraq from all international games because of the Gulf crisis, banned Colombia from playing host to international games because of drug violence, and kicked Costa Rica out of the 1992 Olympic Soccer tournament because it used an overage player in a youth tournament.

FIFA's Executive Committee also established a working group to study how to increase income. However, it dropped for now any plans to enlarge the goals.

"The basic problem is to analyse today's football and make it more attractive," FIFA General Secretary Joseph Blatter said.

"Football is an attacking game. Today they play football to protect their own goal."

Lennart Johansson, head of the powerful Union of European Football Associations, will head the task force. Former French Captain Michel Platini, now coach of France's national team, will represent coaches. Other members will include an active player, an active referee, an administrator, a doctor and a media representative, Blatter said.

Blatter said any changes could be suggested by FIFA by 1992 to the International Football Association board, soccer's rule-making body.

Ideas recently floated include abolishing offside and defensive walls on free kicks, reducing teams from 11 players to 10 and decreasing the distance of penalty kicks, currently taken from 10 yards.

As a reward for Cameroon's advance to the 1990 World Cup quarterfinals, FIFA reduced Europe from 14 to 13 slots in the 21-team tournament and increased Africa from two to three.

A third team could qualify from the Concaefac region, which represents North and Central America and the Caribbean. The United States will get an automatic berth as host. The top team in the qualifying tournament also will advance.

The second-place team in qualifying will play a home-and-home series with the winner of the Oceania region. The winner of that matchup will play a home-and-home series with the no. 4 team from South America, which gets three automatic slots.

U.S. NBA ROUND UP

Hawks 106, Nets 97

ATLANTA (AP) — Moses Malone and Sidney Moncrief came off the bench with 8 points each in the final quarter as the Atlanta Hawks pulled away to down the New Jersey Nets 106-97 Thursday night.

The Hawks led 79-76 early in the fourth quarter when Moncrief started a 20-8 run that ended on his layup for a 99-84 lead with 1:50 to play.

Dominique Wilkins led the Hawks with 23 points and Kevin Willis added 18. Malone finished with 15, Moncrief with 11.

Mookie Blaylock led the Nets with 22 points and Jack Haley added 17.

Knicks 87, Timberwolves 76

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Patrick Ewing and Charles Oakley dominated in the second half for the Knicks, who broke a five-game road losing streak.

Ewing had 31 points and 15 rebounds and Oakley added 22 points and 17 rebounds as New York won its second straight game after a 0-3 start under new coach Jonn MacLeod.

Fooh Richardson almost singlehandedly rallied the Timberwolves, scoring 13 of his 22 points during a 15-2 run that cut New York's lead to 64-62 early in the final period.

Oakley then scored on a rebound and made two free throws, giving the Knicks a 70-62 lead and control.

Jazz 111, Nuggets 126

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Karl Malone scored 39 points and Jeff Malone added 29 as the Jazz won their 11th game in the last 12.

John Stockton added 18 points and 17 assists for Utah. Orlando Woolridge led Denver with 29, Michael Adams scored 25 and Blair Rasmussen 20 for the Nuggets, who had won their last two games.

Suns 125, Magic 111

PHOENIX (AP) — Kevin John-

son scored 26 of his season-high 38 points in the second half, including 8 in a decisive third-period run. Tom Chambers added 25 points, Jeff Hornacek 23 and Xavier McDaniel 16 for the Suns, who won their fourth consecutive game.

Orlando, 1-11 on the road this season and 0-4 against Phoenix in Franchise history, was paced by Scott Skiles' 25 points. Rookie Dennis Scott added 32, while Otis Smith and Terry Carledge had 19 apiece.

Kings 100, Trail Blazers 98

SACRAMENTO, California (AP) — The Sacramento Kings, behind 20 points by Antoine Carr, overcame a 19-point deficit to hand the Portland Trail Blazers their first road loss. The Kings snapped a two-game losing streak as Wayman Tisdale added 18 points and Anthony Bonner 16 points.

Clyde Drexler and Jerome Kersey both had 20 points as Portland, with the best record in the NBA, dropped to 19-2 overall and 9-1 on the road. Terry Porter contributed 18 points to the Blazers, who had an eight-game winning streak snapped.

Warriors 129, Supersonics 106

OAKLAND, California (AP) — Chris Mullin and Mitch Richmond scored 20 points each to lead the Warriors.

Golden State fell behind 32-20 at the end of a sloppy first quarter, but the Warriors rallied strongly, outscoring Seattle by 17 points in the second period for a 55-50 halftime advantage. Reserve forward Tom Tolbert helped spark the move with 11 points in the quarter, while Mullin added eight.

With Richmond and Tim Hardaway scoring 11 points each in the third period, Golden State took firm control of the game. The Warriors outscored Seattle 20-6 in the first six minutes to lead 75-56. They increased their margin to 22 points with 2:47 left in the quarter, and led 93-76 at its conclusion.

Philadelphia to bid for 1994 opening ceremonies

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — The Philadelphia Sports Congress said it may add Veterans Stadium to its bid to host the 1991 World Cup opening ceremonies and games in the first three rounds of the soccer tournament.

Backing up the local sports congress was Bill Giles, owner and president of the Philadelphia Phillies, the National Baseball League baseball team that uses the stadium along with the National Football League's Eagles.

Giles said Thursday he was investigating the possibility of arranging the Phillies' 1991 schedule to accommodate World Cup games at Veterans Stadium, and that discussion has begun on replacing the stadium's astroturf with natural grass.

The stadium's artificial surface has ruled it out as a World Cup site in the past. Franklin Field at the University of Pennsylvania is the other stadium included in the Philadelphia bid.

David Brenner, chairman of the sports congress, also presented a host fee deposit of \$70,000 to Ray Post of the World Cup USA 1994 Organizing Committee. The funds were made available by the Eastern Pennsylvania Youth Soccer Association.

Corinthians beat Sao Paulo 1-0

SAO PAULO, Brazil (R) — Brazilian star Neto was both hero and villain as Corinthians beat Sao Paulo 1-0 in the first leg of the National Soccer Championship final Thursday.

Neto created Corinthians' winning goal in the fourth minute with typically swerving free kick that found Wilson Mano unmarked in the Sao Paulo penalty area.

But in the second half Neto, compared by the Brazilian press to Argentine star Diego Maradona, wasted three glorious chances of giving Corinthians a

more comfortable task in the second and final leg Sunday.

The misses could prove crucial. Under the complicated rules, the final will be decided on aggregate score unless the tally is level over the two legs. In that case, Sao Paulo will win because they scored more goals in the previous games of the competition.

Neto, described by television commentators as two kilogramme overweight, missed all three chances during a four minute spell.

Kasparov, Karpov draw 19th championship game

LYON, France (AP) — Garry Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov agreed to draw the 19th game of their world championship series Wednesday after 39 moves.

Karpov, playing white, and Kasparov, the defending champion, played nearly the entire time allotment of five hours before ending the game, leaving Kasparov ahead 10 points to 9.

The first player to win 12.5 points wins the championship. If both players finish the series with 12 points, Kasparov retains his title.

Karpov opened by moving his queen's pawn forward two squares. Kasparov, who wrested the world title from Karpov in 1985, responded by moving his knight to square F6.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSCH
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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q.1—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ 7 AK7652 G-AK8 ♠ A72
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.2—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ AK1065 ♠ 7 AQ5 ♠ K105
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.3—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ AQ72 ♠ 84 AQ7 ♠ Q104
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 NT 2 ♠
What action do you take?

Q.4—Both vulnerable, as South you hold:
♠ 6 KQJ105 ♠ 73 ♠ J10962
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ 1 ♠ 4 ♠ 4 ♠
Dbl Pass ?
What action do you take?

Q.5—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ AQ73 ♠ A ♠ A6 ♠ KJ10762
The bidding has proceeded:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass 1 ♠ Pass
What do you bid now?

Q.6—As South, vulnerable, you hold:
♠ Q6 ♠ Q93 ♠ AQ10543 ♠ KQ
The bidding has proceeded:
North East South West
1 ♠ Pass 2 ♠ Pass
What do you bid now?

Mutt'n'Jeff



Andy Capp



Peanuts



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SATURDAY DECEMBER 15, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Think in terms of those ideas with which you have already become inspired but which necessitate a revision on your part by your reviving them and seeking new ways to make them operative.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) This can be a very happy day for you especially if you think in terms of your own creative skills and do something that you really enjoy.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Be sure that you do spend your time with your own family as much as possible and discuss with them what you can do to have a happier home.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You find your interest in listening to lessons, sermons, lectures as well as good reading can be paramount now to express yourself by actions.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You need more abundance than you presently have and you are able to envision a greater prosperity than you currently have by extra security.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) This is your day to do pretty much what you please for you are not only able to think in terms of present happiness but in long range well-being.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Now you are able to quietly meditate, reflect and concentrate

upon what you can do for others and also to be happy yourself.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A truly generous friend likes you very much and will do most anything you wish to let him know what you are in mind.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Now you find it up to you to go straight to that prominent person you know today to let him know you will go along with proposed plans.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) This is your time to be off and away to those fascinating new interests or conditions that appeal to you so avoid getting in a rut.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) All of those exacting tasks you have to do can be the means by which you get the goodwill of others and have big success in the long run.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Now you are able to find the answer to why an associate has not been as close recently and you also know to fix whatever has been done.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) This is your day to make your surroundings more attractive and also to think out what you can do to please and serve one who needs your help.

THE BETTER HALF.

By Harris



"SOMETIMES WOMEN MY AGE GET A LITTLE MUSTACHE! IT'S NOT A CATERPILLAR!"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumble words, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

CUDEN

SAUME

HALLET

TADISS

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answers: CUDEN, SAUME, HALLET, TADISS

Answers tomorrow

Yesterday's Jumble: PAUSE, TEPID, CIPHER, NUANCE

Answer: Lots of "pull" will get you almost anywhere, except when this is required—"PUSH"

THE Daily Crossword by Stanley B. Whitman

ACROSS

1 Bricklayer's

5 Versifier

14 Molding

15 Invisible emanation

16 Key letter

17 Highest award

19 Quiver item

20 Result

21 Hush-hush

22 Bifurcation

24 Above: pref.

25 Inclines

28 Falange of song

30 Mess up

33 Ludwig of Jannings

34 Tel Mahal site

35 Snicker sound

38 Reply abbr.

40 Large flairs

42 Oxyglen

43 Light sails

45 Sals a dog upon

46 Hitch

49 Calms

50 Not any

53 Pub offering

55 Elegant

56 A Gardner

59 Addicts

61 Feeds the kitty

63 Decorates brightly

66 Band of leather

67 Rummage

68 Riots

69 Uneasy

70 Vipers

71 Large number

36 Distinguished

37 Verbe

38 Flim

40 It's clear to me

41 Attacks

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Bob Lee

View now how about two Having a nice place of

WHAT THOSE NEIGHBORHOOD BUSY-BODIES BELONGED TO.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answers: CUDEN, SAUME, HALLET, TADISS

Answers tomorrow

GCC plans to boost joint ventures, private sector

ABU DHABI (R) — The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) has prepared a draft plan to be submitted to the group's summit on Dec. 22, aimed at boosting joint investments and encouraging the private sector.

"The plan is intended to boost joint ventures among GCC countries, encourage the private sector and gradually self government ownership in projects," a United Arab Emirates (UAE) finance and industry ministry source said.

The six countries already have around \$5 million worth of existing joint ventures between them.

"The focus of the new draft is on the private sector," one ministry source said. The private sector generates only 35 per cent of the gross national product within the GCC.

The leaders of the GCC will gather at a summit meeting in Doha on Dec. 22 for the first time after Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

The invasion of Kuwait has led to a decline in business confidence in the region, especially in the private sector.

The draft GCC investment plan promises soft loans to projects from member governments provided more than two of the GCC states take part and the cost of the project is not less than 50 million Saudi riyals (\$14 million).

Maghreb, Europe to study Algerian natural gas pipeline

ALGIERS (R) — Energy companies from both sides of the Mediterranean formed a joint venture in Morocco Wednesday to study a proposed pipeline to take Algerian natural gas to Europe through Spain.

Algeria's state hydrocarbons group Sonatrach said it formed the company in Casablanca with Morocco's Societe Nationale des Produits Petroliers, Gas de Portugal S.A., Gaz de France, Enagaz of Spain and Ruhrgas of Germany.

The firm would carry out technical studies on sections of the proposed pipeline that would cross Morocco and the Strait of Gibraltar, Sonatrach said.

Algeria is one of the world's top natural gas exporters and already pumps some 12 billion cubic metres a year through a trans-Mediterranean pipeline to Italy via Tunisia.

It recently announced plans to double natural gas exports this decade to up to 40 billion cubic metres a year.

Sonatrach said the pipeline project was envisaged in two phases, starting with the supply of five billion cubic metres a year to Spain from the end of 1995 and two billion cubic metres annually to Morocco.

Sonatrach and Enagaz agreed on the quantity last November in a letter of intent.

The second phase, under discussion by Sonatrach, Enagaz, Gaz de France and Ruhrgas, would involve transporting gas north of the Pyrenees dividing Spain and France.

A spur to Portugal carrying one billion cubic metres a year was also envisaged, Sonatrach said.

OPEC shows no sign of reducing oil target prices, production

VIENNA, Austria (AP) — Despite unexpected surges in oil prices, OPEC isn't about to stop fighting for higher crude revenues.

"All the countries need money now," OPEC President Sadek Boussena said Thursday at the end of the group's winter strategy session.

During the two-day meeting, the ministers of the 13-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) agreed to continue pumping extra oil to meet any shortfall during the Gulf crisis.

But Saudi Arabia and the other OPEC members also agreed to cut production once the crisis ends.

In doing so, officials hope to avoid a sharp drop in prices that would hurt their struggling economies.

Following the Aug. 2 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, OPEC agreed to suspend its quota system and increase pumping to make up for one million barrels of lost Iraqi and Kuwaiti crude. The oil was deleted from the international market after the embargo of Iraq and Kuwait.

OPEC's current production is at around 23 million barrels a day and unlikely to go much higher.

"We are producing more or less at the maximum level," said Boussena.

Higher prices during the Gulf crisis have brought millions of dollars into the coffers of oil producers. Some OPEC members, such as Algeria, Nigeria and Ecuador, badly need the money to support their impoverished economies.

Saudi Arabia, OPEC's largest oil producer, has contributed much of its windfall to nations suffering from the economic impact of the Gulf crisis. Some of the money has also been used to help pay for the U.S.-led multinational force stationed on Saudi soil.

Boussena, who is Algeria's mines minister, hinted the group might consider lifting its target price above \$21 a barrel after the crisis.

Last July, for the first time since 1986, the ministers raised the benchmark price from \$19 a barrel.

"I am certain people need more money. It is clear. It is stated by all of us," said Boussena.

Since Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, oil prices have fluctuated wildly between roughly \$20 and \$40 on fears that an outbreak of war in the Gulf could cut off crude oil supplies.

Analysts say OPEC's aggressive production during the Gulf crisis could lead to a glut on the market next year — and plunging prices.

Peter Bogin, associate director for oil markets at Cambridge Energy Research Associates in Paris, predicted that at winter's end, crude prices could slide below \$20 a barrel.

Demand for crude has eased because of the slumping American economy and warmer-than-expected weather in the United States and other consuming nations.

Moreover, industrialised nations have been filling their storage tanks to prepare for possible war and an oil cut off in the Gulf.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES

Thursday, December 13, 1990
Central Bank official rates

	Buy	Sell	French franc	131.6	132.4
U.S. dollar	660.0	664.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	302.8	305.8
Pound Sterling	1287.1	1294.8	Dutch guilder	396.2	398.6
Deutsche mark	446.9	449.6	Swedish crown	118.6	119.3
Swiss franc	523.7	526.8	Italian lira (for 100)	59.3	59.7
			Belgian franc (for 10)	215.4	216.7

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Friday.

One Sterling	1.9435/45	U.S. dollar
One U.S. dollar	1.1590/1600	Canadian dollar
	1.4780/90	Deutsche marks
	1.6680/90	Dutch guilders
	1.2675/85	Swiss francs
	30.60/65	Belgian francs
	5.0220/70	French francs
	111.5/1116	Italian lire
	132.30/40	Japanese yen
	5.5750/5800	Swedish crowns
	5.8050/81.00	Norwegian crowns
	5.6960/7010	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	373.20/70	U.S. dollars

WORLD STOCK MARKETS

TOKYO — Tokyo stocks finished lower after posting the heaviest turnover in nearly two months. The Nikkei index was down 293.47 points or 1.19 per cent to 24,349.50.

SYDNEY — Shares fell on government's failure to cut interest rates. Brokers said hopes for a rate cut were inspired after the November labour force data showed unemployment at 8.2 per cent. The All Ordinaries fell 97 points to 1,310.0.

HONG KONG — The Hang Seng eased 24.43 points to 3,125.69 and the broader-based Hong Kong index lost 15.43 to 2,048.81.

SINGAPORE — The market closed weaker on profit-taking. The Straits Times industrial index retreated 6.82 points to end at 1,188.33.

BOMBAY — Shares closed broadly higher in cautious end-week trading but turnover was light amid rumours banks planned to raise interest rates. The Bombay Stock Exchange index rose 7.88 to 1,242.84.

FRANKFURT — The DAX index swung higher after a disappointing start and ended at 1,522.40. This is the first time the index has ended above 1,520 points since Sept. 17.

ZURICH — Swiss shares fell in selective and moderate trading with operators reluctant to take initiatives. The all-share SPI index slipped 1.9 to 924.9.

PARIS — Shares ended weaker after more profit-taking stoked by a drop in Wall Street values. The CAC-40 index fell 23.88 to 1,635.52.

LONDON — Shares dropped from early highs as the market saw U.S. blue chips extending losses on Wall Street. By 1630 GMT the FTSE 100 was 3.8 at 2,168.4.

NEW YORK — Comments from two senators that President Bush might give up efforts for talks with Iraq sent blue chips lower. The Dow fell about 33 to 2,581.

Depressed by recession fears Silver price falls to '76 lows

NEW YORK (R) — Silver prices tumbled Thursday to the lowest levels in nearly 15 years as fears mounted that a recession will deeply cut industrial demand for the metal.

Spot silver on the New York Commodity Exchange closed with a loss of 2.0 cents at \$4.00 an ounce, after sinking briefly to a low of \$3.97.

It was the lowest since Feb. 10, 1976, when silver closed at \$3.93 an ounce.

"The problem with silver is that it's being hurt by changing expectations that the U.S. recession will be deeper and longer than what had been expected only two months ago," said Jeffrey Nichols of American Precious Metals Advisors, Florida-based investment consultants.

Analysts said silver is viewed in two ways — as a precious metal and an industrial one — and concern is mounting that a recession will reduce its industrial use.

On a global basis, world-wide production this year of 530 million ounces is overshooting industrial demand of 480 million ounces, analysts said.

Silver's chronic oversupply was highlighted in a recent research study that said world stocks were equal to 2.35 years' worth of industrial consumption.

But the big drag on prices was the prospect of a bad economic recession, the analysts said.

Silver's major uses, for photographic products and solder, stand to suffer from a recession. The photographic industry consumes about 45 per cent of all silver mined in the world. Indebted Mexico and Peru are major producers.

"The consensus is shifting from a short and mild recession to something more serious, like a longer and more prolonged downturn," said Nichols.

Investors, dealers, industrial users assume that demand for silver will diminish, and this has been reflected in the price.

In other precious metals trading, spot gold ended \$1.60 higher at \$374.30 an ounce in typically slow year-end dealings.

On the New York Mercantile Exchange, platinum for January delivery closed down \$1.40 to \$414.50 an ounce. Palladium for March delivery closed down \$3.10 at \$88.45 an ounce after sinking to a new contract low of \$86.00.

United States company enters major Ethiopian business venture

ADDIS ABABA (R) — A U.S. company has agreed a \$5 million joint venture with Ethiopia, just nine months after the government announced it had abandoned Marxism, the government daily Ethiopian Herald has said.

It said the U.S.-based Pioneer Overseas Corporation was investing \$3.5 million in a 20-year project to grow and market food seeds.

"The state-owned Ethiopian Seeds Corporation would provide the remaining \$1.5 million, it said. The new company, will be called Ethiopian Pioneer Hi-Bred Seeds Incorporated.

It is the first United States investment in Ethiopia for years and follows a visit to Addis Ababa last month by Herman Cohen, U.S. assistant secretary of state for African affairs.

Political analysts saw Cohen's visit as a sign of warmer ties which have developed since Iraq invaded Kuwait on Aug. 2.

Ethiopia, currently holding the African chair in the United Nations' Security Council, has strongly supported the U.S.-led anti-Iraq coalition.

Since President Mengistu Haile

EC report calls for food, technical help for Moscow

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Community (EC) should help the Soviet Union achieve a market economy by sending food and technical aid, the EC's executive commission has said.

It recommended in a report that the Community should consider a 750 million European Currency Unit (ECU) (\$1 billion) programme for 1991 to help fill empty shelves in Soviet shops.

The report, a copy of which was obtained by Reuters, put likely Soviet food import needs next year at three billion ECUs (\$4.2 billion), and said foreign contracts signed so far by Moscow covered only one-quarter of this amount.

The commission painted a grim picture of a Soviet economy hit by poor delivery systems, falling work discipline, high absenteeism, and a growing tendency among Soviet republics to ignore that needs of other parts of the country.

The report was issued against a backdrop of open Soviet warnings that Western Europe risked being flooded soon with Soviet migrants unless big injections of investments are promised.

With Soviet exports stagnating and its vital oil sales abroad tumbling, the commission report said Moscow must ultimately be responsible for the nation's economic rescue — but that foreign assistance was necessary too.

It suggested that only one-third of the food programme next year be provided as direct grants, while two-thirds would come as credits from the EC budget.

Against a background of reports of food supplies being siphoned off to black markets or left to rot in railway sidings, the commission said fresh supplies must be closely coordinated with Soviet authorities and independent aid organisations.

It called for a five-point programme of technical assistance to Moscow costing 400 million ECUs (\$560 million) next year and 600 million ECUs (\$840 million) in 1992.

Under this programme, the EC would help finance management training, education for civil servants in a market economy and the creation of a Western-style social security network.

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Cinema PLAZA Tel: 699238 Nadia Al Jundi & Farouq Al Fihawi in DEATH SQUAD Arabic Show: 12:30, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15, 9:45 p.m.	

Major tells EC summit Britain wants positive role in Europe

ROME (R) — British Prime Minister John Major, attending his first European Community (EC) summit, said Friday that Britain wanted to play a central and positive role in Europe.

"I don't think anyone in the community wants confrontation," Major told reporters before the opening of the two-day meeting in Rome.

"We have to engage in discussions in a constructive spirit and so must our partners," he added.

His tone was in marked contrast to that of his predecessor Margaret Thatcher, whose blunt and belligerent defence of British policy led to countless rows at EC summits during her 11-year premiership.

Her lone stand at the Rome summit last October over moves to a single currency, when she said the other 11 were in "cloud cuckoo land," prompted the resignation of her deputy Sir Geoffrey Howe and the leadership challenge which toppled her.

Major stressed, however, that the thrust of British policy towards the Community had not changed and that London still favoured promoting a "hard ECU" (European Currency Unit) as a parallel EC currency circulating alongside national currencies.

"I was a member of Mrs. Thatcher's cabinet for some time... the policies then remain cabinet policies," said Major, who developed the hard ECU plan while serving as her chancellor of the exchequer (finance minister).

All other 11 governments

want the Community to have a single currency managed by an EC central banking system.

"You can't just leap at that," Major said. "It's a decision of immense significance... we need to see if it works. We need to see what the economic effect of it will be."

In an attempt to bridge the gap between Britain and its partners, European Commission President Jacques Delors intends to present a draft treaty on monetary union which provides for the new EC Central Bank to manage a "strengthened ECU" during the transitional phase to monetary union, EC officials say.

Major was speaking during a round of bilateral meetings with some of his EC colleagues, designed to help the new prime minister get to know veterans of Community life.

He had breakfast with summit host and chairman Giulio Andreotti, then saw Rudi Lubbers of the Netherlands and German Chancellor Helmut Kohl. Officials say he also plans talks with French President Francois Mitterrand and Irish Prime Minister Charles Haughey some time during the summit.

On other summit issues, Major will press for a very strong statement on a need to restart the failed GATT talks on world trade, British officials said.

Major said the Community must ensure that the distribution of any food aid to the Soviet Union was carefully managed.

"It is no good having food rotting in a (railway) siding in

Leiningrad rather than rotting in a grain store here," he said.

Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said meanwhile that despite a change of style, Britain would not allow the summit to take binding decisions on political union — a broad overhaul of the EC's powers and institutions.

Such decisions should come after negotiations in the political union inter-governmental conference (IGC) which will formally open in parallel with an IGC on monetary union at the end of the summit Saturday.

"If they try, once again, to impose decisions on us before discussion has started, then we will be heading for difficulties," Hurd told Le Figaro in an interview published Friday.

Some diplomats believe that Italy may try to push the political union debate in the same way it did for monetary union last October.

"Everybody knows that progress at the end of the day has to be by unanimity," Hurd told reporters in Rome. "Nobody can be hijacked. This puts us in a strong position."

British government officials later hammered home the message that Major was bringing to the summit — that his government wanted to play a full part in shaping the European Community from within and did not want to be isolated.

Emphasising the difference between the 47-year-old Major and his predecessor Thatcher, 18 years his senior, one official said

Major would "stress that most people of his generation and younger in Britain take a very positive view of the Community."

He added: "We see it in our national self-interest to help build and shape the European Community and that's what we hope to do."

Conservative popularity slips...polls

Meanwhile Major's Conservative Party, whose popularity soared when he replaced Thatcher last month, has lost ground to the opposition Labour Party, opinion polls released Thursday show.

A Gallup poll for Friday's Daily Telegraph newspaper gave the Conservatives 43 per cent, compared with 40.5 for Labour and 10.5 per cent for the centrist Liberal Democrats.

A similar poll for the Independent newspaper put the Conservatives at 47 per cent and Labour 38 per cent.

The same trend had been reflected in a poll 24 hours earlier in the Guardian newspaper, which gave the Conservatives 45 per cent and Labour 43 per cent.

Thatcher's departure initially boosted the Conservatives' fortunes, giving them a poll lead of up to 11 per cent under Major.

Until Thatcher's resignation, opinion polls had for more than a year consistently placed Labour well ahead of the Conservatives — sometimes by as much as 20 per cent.

30 held in Albania riots

VIENNA (R) — Albanian media said Friday 30 people were arrested and 10 injured in an anti-Communist riot that raised a spectre of violence in Albania's move from rigid rule to multi-party democracy.

The riot was the second in Albania in a week that saw the birth of the small Balkan state's first independent political party for 45 years after the ruling Communists dumped steadfast opposition to a multi-party system.

Radio and the Albanian News Agency (ATA) said troops in the northern city of Shkoder quelled Thursday's violence after "hooligans" used dynamite, knives, iron bars and "whatever else they could get hold of" against police and official property.

Newspaper reports said demonstrators also had guns.

ATA reported the arrest and injuries in a domestic dispatch obtained by Reuters by telephone. Other sources in Tirana said Shkoder, near the Yugoslav border, was quiet Friday.

The New Democratic Party, founded at a peaceful rally of tens of thousands of cheering supporters in Tirana Wednesday, condemned the violence and appealed for calm.

"Such acts have nothing in common with the democracy we all together want to establish but they compromise and undermine it," the group said in a statement published in Friday's newspapers.

In France, Albania's leading intellectual Ismail Kadare urged compatriots not to seek revenge for decades of Stalinist repression and said hardliners could hit back at change.

"Albanians must not fall into bad habits of a post-dictatorship period. They must forget feelings of vengeance," novelist Kadare told the daily Le Figaro. He defected to France in October over the slow pace of reform.

"Like everyone, I'm frightened. I fear a counter-attack by Albania's conservative forces. But I think the democratic forces will be able to crush them peacefully," Kadare said.

President Ramiz Alia Tuesday did an apparent U-turn on democracy, steering acceptance of alternative political parties through a Central Committee meeting that sacked five politicians and unrepentant student protesters in Tirana.

He has warned of "pain and losses" if the transition to pluralism goes out of control.

Sources in the Democratic Party, formed by students and academics, said founders would fan out across Albania Friday to explain their platform for peaceful democratic change and visit Shkoder and Kavaje to investigate the unrest.

Windows were smashed, shops looted and street lighting wrecked in Kavaje, about 70 kilometres southwest of Tirana, when youths rampaged through the town Tuesday, Albanian journalists said. They had no reports of injuries or arrests.

"Generally the police and army in Albania are being very, very restrained. They probably fear any criticism by the democratic forces for using violence," one source said.

The army, hardliners and Sigurimi secret police forces have yet to take a stance on this week's startling changes, which have swung maverick Albania behind pluralism one year or more after the rest of Eastern Europe.

Consulates to open in Kiev, New York

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Soviet Union will open a consulate in New York next month in exchange for the United States opening a diplomatic office in Kiev in the Ukraine, the State Department said.

The announcement called the decision "an important step that will facilitate the growth of tourism and business contacts, as well as exchange and cooperation programmes."

Meanwhile weary shoppers ending another day of scouring stores for food said Thursday they welcomed economic aid from the United States and did not feel ashamed, because it wasn't a handout.

"What humiliation?" said Nikolai Kropotov as he bundled up against the chill of the Moscow night. "No one is humiliated."

The U.S. government has promised the Soviet Union up to \$1 billion in loan guarantees to buy American wheat, corn and other farm products to stave off food shortages this winter.

"You are selling it quite fairly and we are buying it quite fairly," said Kropotov, 72. "There is no embarrassment."

As he adjusted a cloth sack to secure three loaves bought at bread store No. 150 in western Moscow, Kropotov said he was confident the food the Soviet government would buy from the United States would reach the people, despite the current problems in the nation's supply system.

Expressing similar confidence was Viktor Rozhkov, 55, who was waiting in the store while his wife bought bread.

"At present, I think the food will make it to the stores, what with the Interior Ministry, the KGB and the police all controlling it."

Chinese Premier meets Aquino

MANILA (AP) — Chinese Premier Li Peng said Friday that his country would supply 300,000 tons of oil to the Philippines, which has suffered major economic losses due to the Gulf crisis.

Li and Philippine President Corason Aquino turned their attention to the situation in the Gulf in their talks on the second day of the Chinese premier's three-day visit, said Press Undersecretary Horacio Paredes.

Paredes told reporters that Mrs. Aquino initially praised China for its work in the Security Council, which last month approved a resolution authorising

ing its distribution," Rozhkov said.

He had some mixed feelings about the aid. "On the one hand we need help, but on the other, you have to pay for any credit," Rozhkov said.

"If it was help simply free of charge, it would be humiliating," he said, "but as it's credit, it's not humiliating."

Asked what kind of goods he would like to see purchased with the loan guarantees, Rozhkov replied: "Basic food, canned goods, sausage, meat products. Nowadays, we have practically nothing."

Others questioned on the street said they would like to see more meat, butter and milk in the stores.

"I want to see all those things (that were) freely available in the shops a year ago," said Muscovite Raisa L. Lebedinskaya.

"It is very good that our relationships are so close," she said of the current ties with the United States.

A 68-year-old woman who wanted to be identified only as Karys said the U.S. aid was only proper, because the Soviet Union had helped other nations for years.

"We have been helping other countries a lot, and that's why everything has disappeared," she said. "Why should we be embarrassed now? I don't think it's embarrassing."

Vasily I. Tarasov, who was hurrying home with a plastic bag in each hand, viewed the U.S. economic assistance as needed help from a friend.

"We are to blame," said Tarasov, 75. "We allowed it. The whole nation is to blame, and now the whole nation has to escape from this."

N. Korean premier leaves Seoul regretting lack of progress

PANMUNJOM, Korea (R) — North Korean Premier Yon Hyong-Muk returned home from four days of talks in Seoul Friday, telling his South Korean hosts to be less narrow-minded in their views of Korean reconciliation.

Yon crossed the heavily fortified border before midday at this cluster of official buildings, the only crossing point between North and South Korea.

"There are many people travelling through Panmunjom," he said, "but the road is too narrow and we need to widen it."

The stocky, 63-year-old technocrat entered South Korea Tuesday for a third round of talks with South Korean Prime Minister Kang Young-Hoon.

But the talks, as expected, produced little more than an agreement to meet again next year.

The prime ministers first met in Seoul in September in the highest-level inter-Korean dialogue since the peninsula was split in 1945. A second meeting was held in Pyongyang in October.

But the Koreans cannot agree on a basic first step to reconciliation, and the third round of talks ended sourly, each side blaming the other for the lack of progress.

"North Korea was very regretful that the talks could not produce any substantive result," North Korean spokesman An Byong-Su told reporters.

"South Korea is now stepping backwards," he said. "The

South could discard its insincere attitude if the prospect for progress in the talks is to become brighter."

In Seoul, Park Hee-Tae, a spokesman for the ruling Democratic Liberal Party said: "I hope the North will stop trying to make the talks a stage for propaganda or a place for political manoeuvring aimed at creating divisions in the South."

"We pray for the fourth round of talks to be talks for results and not talks for talks themselves," he said.

North Korea has insisted that both sides first sign a non-aggression accord while Seoul has demanded initial agreement on measures to build confidence, such as increased cross-border trade and travel.

Tambo calls for review of sanctions

JOHANNESBURG (R) — African National Congress (ANC) President Oliver Tambo said Friday it was time the anti-apartheid movement reviewed its stand on sanctions against South Africa.

"It is no longer enough to repeat the trite slogans," he said at the opening of the ANC's first full conference inside the country in 30 years.

"We should carefully re-evaluate the advisability of insisting on the retention of sanctions, given the situation domestically and abroad," Tambo said.

Tambo who returned to South Africa Thursday at the end of three decades in exile, called on ANC activists to intensify the struggle against white rule "at all fronts," but said this should take account of changing realities.

The ANC has said repeatedly sanctions should be maintained until President F.W. de Klerk has irreversibly scrapped apartheid.

Constitutional talks on giving blacks the vote have only reached a preliminary stage and De Klerk is not due to repeal key race laws including residential apartheid until the parliamentary session starting in February.

ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela asked the European Community (EC) this month to delay any change in its sanctions policy until February or March next year, while the ANC consults churches, trade unions and other groups.

EC Foreign Minister were due to discuss South Africa at a summit Friday.

7 Hong Kong boat people saved from suicide bid

GENEVA (R) — Seven Vietnamese boat people set themselves ablaze in an apparent collective suicide attempt in a Hong Kong camp Friday, the United Nations Refugee Agency reported.

A spokesman for the office of the High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said none of the seven was in danger although two were severely burnt and were being treated in hospital.

The seven, from Whitehead Detention Camp, Hong Kong's

largest with a total population of 40,000, were among a group of 10 on a hunger strike.

They had recently been classified as non-refugees after screening and faced repatriation to Communist Vietnam as illegal immigrants, the spokesman said.

More than 52,000 Vietnamese, seeking a better life abroad, live in crowded detention camps and centres in the British colony after sailing out of Vietnam in makeshift craft.

Amazonians protest against murder of workers

XAPURI, Brazil (R) — Rubber tappers have demonstrated in front of the courthouse where the accused murderer of Brazilian rainforest martyr Chico Mendes was being tried.

Osmarino Amancio, a rubber tapper leader and successor to Mendes, asked some 200 people at the Amazonian courthouse protesting against the murder of yet another worker to raise clenched fists in a moment of silence in memory "of our fellow worker who was killed."

Jose Helio da Silva, an adviser to the Union of Rural Workers of Palmares in Pernambuco state, northeastern Brazil, was gunned down as he got out of his car early Thursday.

According to the rubber tappers in Xapuri, the president of the Union of Rural Workers in Palmares received a letter in May telling him his adviser must be silenced. "Chico Mendes sleeps because he talked too much," the unsigned letter read.

The murder of Mendes on Dec. 22, 1988 has come to symbolise both the efforts of the rubber tappers to preserve the Amazon rain forest as well as the violence to which rural workers in Brazil are subjected.

Mendes' campaign to save the rain forest earned him enemies among powerful farmers who wanted to clear the land.

Rancher Darly Alves da Silva has been accused of ordering his son Darci to murder Mendes. In the opening day of the trial of the two Wednesday Darci confessed to murdering Mendes but said he acted alone.

Several hundred rubber tappers and other rural workers travelled long distances to attend the trial.

NATO: Soviet arms spending higher than admitted

BRUSSELS (R) — The Soviet Union is still spending far more on defence than Moscow has admitted, although it is cutting back in many areas now the cold war is over, NATO said in a special report Friday.

Compiled by economic experts of the 16-nation Western alliance, the report says Moscow spent between 135 and 160 billion roubles (\$243 and 289 billion) on defence last year, compared with a figure of 77.3 billion roubles (\$139.4 billion) given by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

In real terms, Soviet defence spending fell by four per cent last year and similar size cuts were expected this year, according to the report which was made available to journalists.

The report says Soviet defence spending is likely to continue falling until at least 1995 as the country's economic crisis obliged Moscow to devote more resources to the civilian sector.

"We hope the trend will continue," a senior allied diplomat

told reporters. "Despite greater openness... there are still problems with published statistics that continue to understate the (defence) burden."

For decades, the Soviet Armed Forces took the lion's share of public spending and the military, while defying rumours of a coup, has grumbled about its reduced role and public standing.

The NATO report, based on both published and intelligence material, says the Soviets do not include all defence items in their military budget.

It also says their pricing system does not reflect true costs — hence the discrepancy between the NATO and Soviet spending figures. The rouble is not freely convertible to Western currencies.

NATO diplomats said the defence cuts were mostly in the sphere of conventional weapons, including tanks, armoured vehicles. The withdrawal of troops stationed in former Eastern European satellites that have be-

come multi-party democracies with looser links to Moscow had also contributed.

"There hasn't been that much change in Soviet production of nuclear weapons, particularly long-range nuclear missiles, and they are still modernising naval forces," one diplomat said.

While mentioning in passing the possible break-up of the Soviet Union, the report does not reflect fully the gloom of another still-secret NATO paper on the dire economic crisis in the Soviet Union.

Nevertheless, it says Soviet attitudes to defence have changed radically over the last five years.

"Realisation that economic policy was failing, coupled with a reappraisal of political and security policy has led to dramatic changes," the report says.

It says the Soviet Union is continuing to convert military production to meet the increasingly desperate needs of consumers, who face bare shelves and food rationing. Civilian goods now account

for about half of defence industry output and that proportion will grow, it says.

But the report is pessimistic that this will help resolve the economic crisis. "Conversion is unlikely to fulfil all expectations," it says.

"Soviet officials now understand that the financial benefits of arms control and conversion will be smaller and longer in coming than they originally anticipated," the report adds.

The report says "the continuing failure of economic policies" will provide an even greater impetus for reducing Soviet defence spending.

"During the 1990s, NATO also expects a radical reduction in the size of the military industrial complex and a further shifting of resources to the civilian sector," it says.

This will reduce the Soviet Union's ability to step up arms production in a crisis. But the report says NATO expects Moscow to retain enough conventional and nuclear forces to protect the security of the state.

Colombian drug lords free third kidnapped journalist

MEDELLIN (R) — Colombia's cocaine barons have freed a well-known television journalist 15 weeks after kidnapping her, witnesses said.

Azucena Lievano, editor of the Cipro television news programme, was the third of eight journalists kidnapped by cocaine traffickers to be freed.

She was one of a group of journalists kidnapped by drug traffickers last Aug. 30. The group was abducted en route to what they believed would be a clandestine interview with

Manuel Perez, leader of the National Liberation Army guerrilla group.

Lievano Thursday was dropped off outside the gates of El Colombiano newspaper in Medellin, the base for Colombia's largest cocaine cartel, newspaper employees said.

Juan Vito, a local journalist, and Hero Buss, a German journalist, were released recently in what political analysts say could be a gesture of goodwill by drug gangs negotiating with the Colombian government.

Murder charges against

U.S. 'suicide doctor' dropped

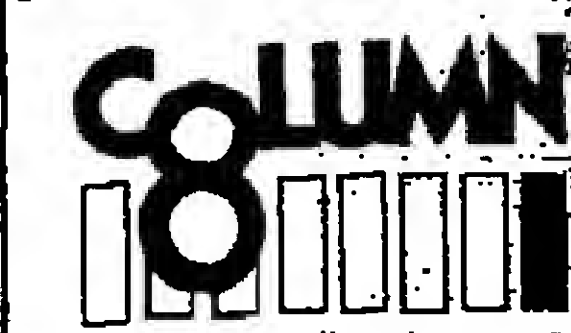
DETROIT (R) — A judge dismissed murder charges Thursday against an American doctor who helped a woman kill herself with his home-made "suicide machine."

The Michigan judge ruled there was insufficient evidence to try Dr. Jack Kevorkian in the death of Janet Adkins, 54, a Portland, Oregon woman who committed suicide using the physician's machine on June 4. "Janet Adkins, not Kevorkian, caused the death," Oak-

land County District Court Judge Gerald McNally ruled.

The judge noted Michigan has no law against assisting suicide attempts. He suggested the state legislature, not the courts, must address right-to-die issues, including, whether assisted suicide should be legal.

Kevorkian, 62, was charged with first-degree homicide earlier this month. He called the ruling a "victory for the elderly and the terminally ill."



Stone chariot horses fetch \$606,000

LONDON (AP) — A fragmentary stone relief of two chariot horses from ancient Persia, the match to another part of a relief in the British Museum, sold at a Sotheby's auction Thursday for \$319,000 (\$606,000). The auction house said the fragment, showing the heads of two splendid steeds with their forelocks tied in topknots with tassels, was brought to England in the early 19th century by Sir Gore Ouseley, British ambassador to the court of Persia from 1810 to 1815. Ouseley later presented some of his collection to the British Museum, leaving the rest, including the relief, to his son. The son, in turn, left the relief to St. Michael's College in Tenbury, of which he was the founder. The college at one time reportedly used the piece as a doorknob. It was later sold by the college at auction to an antique dealer from Cheltenham, who sold it Thursday. The buyer wished to remain anonymous. Sotheby's said.

Town to get rid of embarrassing name

SEXMOAN, Philippines (AP) — For years, the name of this town north of Manila had been the butt of jokes — but no more. The Congress has decided to bring back the old pre-Spanish name. The Senate approved legislation renaming Sexmoan as Sasman. The bill has already been approved by the House of Representatives. Sen. Agapito Aquino said Sasman meant "meeting place" in Pampangan, the local dialect. Spanish colonisers changed the first syllable to "sex." Then, under American rule in the early 20th century, the spelling was further changed to Sexmoan. Sen. Aquino said he did not know if plans were afoot to change the name of the nearby town of Macabebe, pronounced "make-a-baby." The towns are about 60 kilometres north of Manila.

U.S. pop is an export smash

NEW YORK (R) — Though they may no longer crave American cars and television sets, consumers around the world are madder than ever for Mickey, Michael and Madonna. According to a forthcoming issue of Fortune magazine, overseas shoppers have made U.S. pop culture the hottest export, and American icons, such as Disney cartoon character Mickey Mouse and pop singers Michael Jackson and Madonna, are ringing cash registers at an unprecedented rate. American movies, music, television programming and home video are bringing in a trade surplus of about \$8 billion a year, the magazine said in its Dec. 31 issue. It added that only the U.S. aerospace industry out-ranked pop culture as an export. The magazine said that over the last five years the overseas revenues of Hollywood studios had doubled and estimated sales of U.S. television shows to Europe at about \$600 million a year. In addition, the magazine said, the \$20 billion a year music business collected 70 per cent of its revenues outside the United States. Fortune said that recent, well-publicised investments in the entertainment industry by Japanese and European giants were merely the beginning of a trend.

Christmas miracle

SYDNEY (R) — Australian doctors are proclaiming a Christmas miracle after a nine-month-old baby survived when her pram was crushed by a train. The child's pram rolled away from her mother at a Perth suburban railway station Tuesday morning. It fell on to the track in front of a city-bound train which was unable to stop. "If you want a Christmas miracle, here it is," a hospital spokeswoman said by telephone Wednesday. "The train apparently picked up the pram and dragged it along underneath before it could stop," the spokeswoman said. "The pram probably protected the child from further injury." The baby was admitted to hospital with a fractured skull and cuts. She came out of intensive care Wednesday. The mother is still "pretty shocked," the spokeswoman said.